The Art of LIVING

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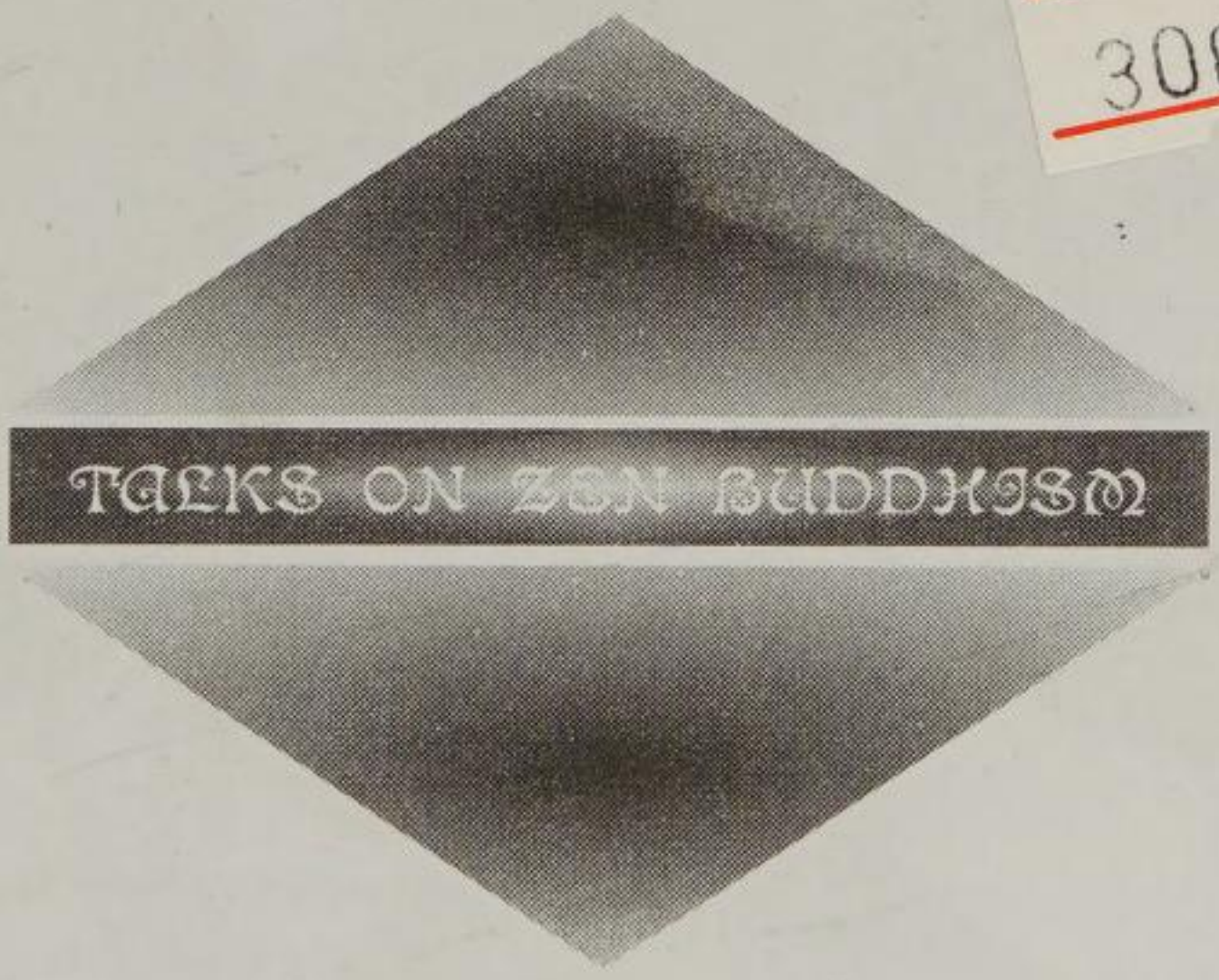

ZEN AND THE ART OF LIVING

COLLECTION OF DISCOURSES 8 TO 14 FROM THE
BOOK TAKE IT EASY, VOL I BASED ON THE DOKA
OF ZEN MASTER IKKYU

Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh
is now known simply
as Osho.

Osho has explained that
His name is derived
from William James' word
'oceanic' which means
dissolving into the ocean.
Oceanic describes the
experience, He says,
but what about
the experiencer? For that
we use the word 'Osho'.
Later He came to find out
that 'Osho' has also been
used historically in the Far
East meaning
"The Blessed One, on whom
the Sky Showers Flowers."

OSHO

ZEN
AND
THE ART OF LIVING

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INTRODUCTION

Here he is again, singing the same song again yet ever fresh and fragrant, cascading each now moment, every new born word, eternally young.

Osho says: I am not saying any new thing every day. The truth is very simple and it can be said in a few lines. But if you don't hear it, I have to tell it again and again.

I go on talking to you so that one day I will be able to persuade you to listen to the silence that has happened to me. And those who have started understanding me, they are not listening to my words any more they are listening to my presence.

Many of you here have already entered into a wordless contact with me. If you listen to my words, that too is only because those words contain something of the wordless.

That's why when new people come who are not acquainted with me and my ways, they cannot understand what is happening here. Something is happening here, but it is very elusive. It cannot be explained to the outsiders. It is a love relationship.

I go on talking to you, the same things. I talk out of love, you listen to me out of love. Talking and listening is not relevant but the communion. Talking and listening is just an excuse for the communion to happen.

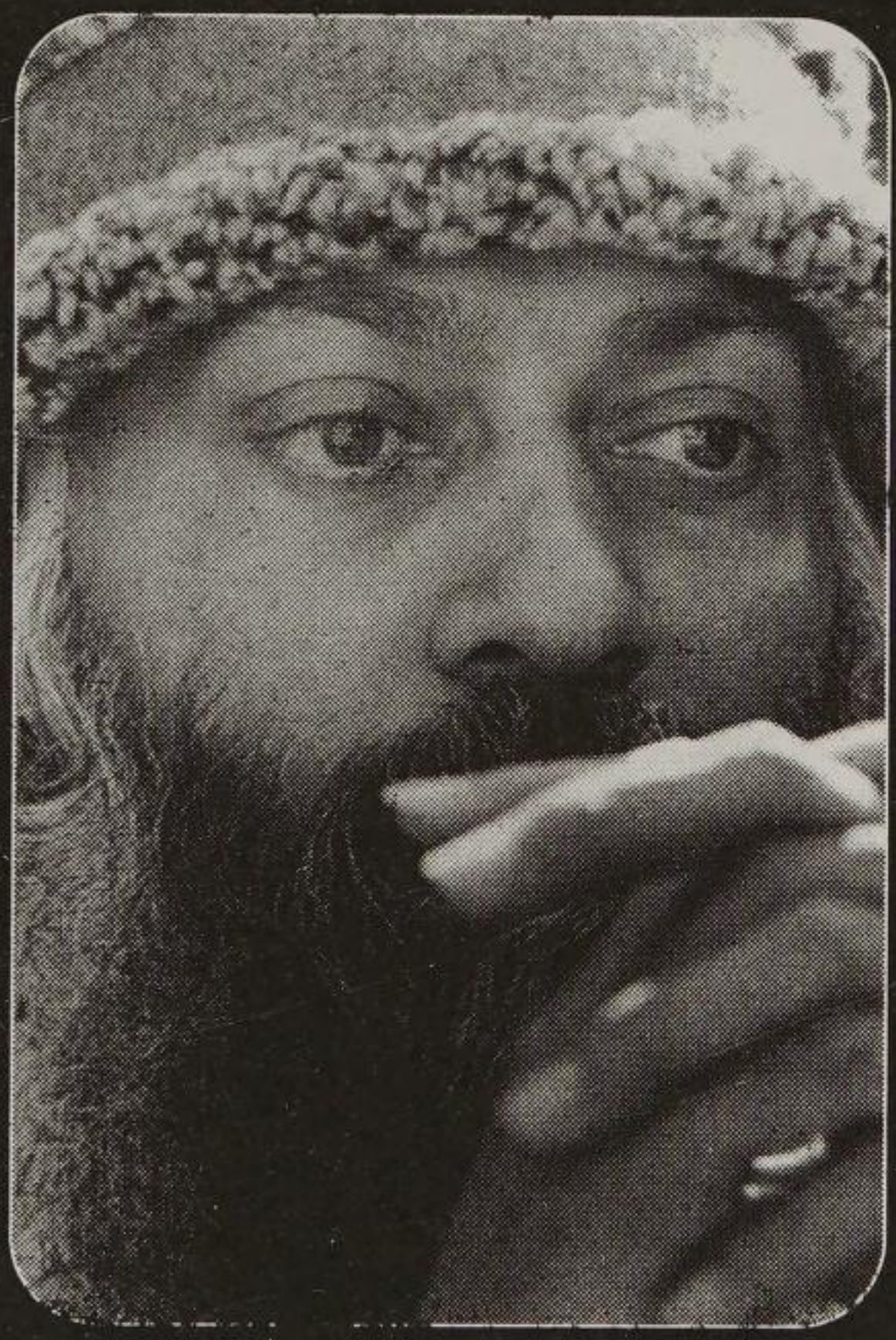
Soon the day will come when I have trapped enough people who can listen to my silence. Then I will sit silently with you, every day, year in, year out. So those who have a desire for words, satisfy it as much as you can. Soon words will disappear... but then I will be only for the insiders. Then there will be no possibility for new outsiders to enter in because they can only enter through the gate of words. I will speak a little longer just so that a few more people can get in.

Once I have got my people, all of my people, then there will be no need to talk. I will sit silently, you will sit silently. We will be together and we will let god happen...

The special flavor of the song sung by Osho in these pages derives from the poems of Zen master Ikkyu. Gentle as a summer breeze, yet piercing as the sharpest sword, Ikkyu's poems reflect the clarity of Buddha-Mind, imbued as they are with the distinct Zen quality of familiarity/respect, humour/sincerity.

Osho says: "These small poems of Ikkyu are of immense importance. Religion has to talk in parables, in poetry, in metaphors, in myth. Those are indirect ways of hinting at the truth just hinting, not direct pointing; just whispering, not shouting. Don't try to understand Ikkyu's poems intellectually; rather play with them with love, sympathy, rapport. And slowly slowly, like a fragrance, like a melody, something will arise in you and you will be able to see what this man wants to convey. He wants to convey that which cannot be conveyed; he wants to say which cannot be said. And he has been able to convey it."

MA SAGARPRIYA.



1

In Search of a Ghost

If I go any closer, I may have to jump...

I don't understand--tears start coming out of my eyes.

Why are your teachings not accepted as religious by the society?

Why do your statements seem to me to be arrogant?

What is the difference between being totally surrendered and being a brainless robot?

If I disappear, who will pay the rent?

Is spiritual love possible in this rotten world?

The first question

When I was younger I used to feel a certain pull near open windows, high up in buildings. Many of the people with whom I work now also do. The feeling is: "If I go any closer, I may have to jump."

My experience is that it is not suicidal. What is it? Can you say more about it?

Yes, Devabhakta I can say more about it because I have felt that same fear in you when you come close to me. You keep a certain distance. You are afraid. The fear is not suicidal--or is suicidal in a very different sense, in a spiritual sense.

You are not afraid of the ordinary death; you are afraid of what Zen people call 'the great death'. You are afraid of disappearing, you are afraid of melting. You are afraid of losing your hold upon yourself. And everybody is afraid of that in one way or other.

That's why we live always in control. Control is not only imposed by the society; even if the society removes all control, people will continue to live in control, they will create their own control, their own discipline. Even if society decides to

make everybody absolutely free, people will not be free, people will not accept freedom. They will create their own bondage, they will create their own imprisonments, they will create their own chains. They will become their own jailers.

Freedom is frightening, because freedom simply means you will not be there. It is not that you are going to be free: you are going to be free from yourself. You are the bondage--when the bondage disappears, you disappear.

And sometimes that fear can come to you when you are close to a window on a high building, or close to an abyss in the mountains. That feeling can take possession of you. That physical situation can become a triggering inside your psyche. It can give you the idea that it is possible to disappear.

And remember, there is both fear and there is attraction--it is always so. Whenever you are attracted by something, you are also afraid of it. That's why man is attracted towards women and is afraid of women.

That's why I say your so-called saints who are still afraid of women are still in love with women. Certainly they are--they are obsessed, because fear and love go together. They may have moved to the Himalayan caves; sitting in their caves they may not be thinking at all that they are in any way interested in women, but they are frightened. If the rumor comes that a beautiful woman is coming to the mountains to visit, something will stir inside them. Fear it will be! But fear shows attraction; fear shows that you are still involved.

The scriptures that say anything against women are scriptures written by people who were obsessed with women. They may have renounced but they have not changed; they are the same people. One day they were rushing towards women, another day they start rushing away from women, but it is the same game played in a different way. The woman remains their attraction, their fear.

And so is the case when you are attracted to a Man. When a woman is attracted towards a man, there is fear. All

love creates fear, immediately brings fear.

So these two things go together. You are attracted to the open windows, because there is great attraction in being free from this cage that has become your life. But this is the only life that you know of. Then there comes fear--who knows? is there another life or not? You may simply disappear as you are and you may not appear on another plane, in another existence--then what?

Making love to a woman or man, the same fear grips you. That's why orgasm is so impossible, so difficult. And don't think that only women find it difficult to have orgasm--it is exactly as difficult for men as it is for women. With man one simple thing helps him to pretend: his ejaculation helps him--he thinks he has attained the orgasm because he can see something visible happening. The woman has no visible ejaculation, so she is puzzled, worried whether she had the orgasm or not.

Ejaculation is not orgasm. Orgasm means you use the other's being as a window and you leap into the unknown; the other uses your window and leaps into the unknown...then there is orgasm. When you disappear, orgasm happens. Orgasm is a state of immense expansion. It is expansion of consciousness, it is a state of unboundedness. You become one with the sky. You are no more tiny, you are no more in limitations.

You are no more! Because as long as you are, there are limitations, boundaries, definitions. When all definitions have been broken and you are simply there, indefinable, inexpressible, something of the grandeur of God has happened to you...for a moment you have melted and you have known and you have tasted.

The same happens to a disciple coming to a master--the fear. Hence, down the ages, so much has been talked about trust. What is trust? Trust means simply the courage to take the jump. It is risky, it is a gamble, because there can be no security. What security is there to be with me? What

security is there to surrender to me? I don't guarantee you anything! I can't say what is going to happen, because it can't be said. You have to move in darkness and you have to move in great trust--only then can you move.

You would like some objective proof of God. That's why people ask about proofs of God. You would like some objective proof of samadhi, of Buddhahood. You would like something tangible that you can touch and see and hold in your hands, and you can feel and you can judge. Then trust will be easy--but then trust will not be needed.

You don't trust in the sun, you don't trust in the moon they are simply there. Nobody asks any proof for the sun or for the moon. They are simply there, they are facts. Trust is not needed. That's why in science trust is not needed, because science searches for the facts.

In religion trust is needed because trust makes you available towards the ultimate and makes truth available to you. Trust is the door, a window to truth. But courage will be needed.

Devabhakta, that fear, that attraction to the windows, that you were pulled also, was showing one thing: that from your very childhood you have been in a search. Maybe the search has been carried down the ages through other lives--that's my feeling about you. You have been groping and searching; you have been continuously searching . Hence the fear and the attraction. Attraction because the search is there, and fear because who knows?--if you go too close to the window, in a sudden mad moment you may be so much thrilled, you may be so much possessed by the idea, you may take the jump. Then what? So it is better not to go very close.

And that I have been watching in you when you came to me.

Even in Germany you were not wearing orange and the mala--that too is part of that fear. You don't want to get too much involved with me; you want to keep a safe distance. When you come here you allow a little bit of closeness, but when you go away you start avoiding me. And I have been

trying to contact you, but you were not available. I can contact you only if you remain involved with me. I wanted to help you, but you were disconnected.

So if somebody is trying to cheat me, he is really cheating himself. I go on trying to contact my people, and I can contact only those who are really with me--in thick and thin, in joy and in misery, in ecstasy and agony, in life and death. I can contact only those people.

So now become a little more alert. Much is possible. I am also a window. There is no need to be afraid--fear is natural, still there is no need to be afraid . In spite of the fear, come close to me. One kind of suicide will happen: the ego will commit suicide. That's what sannyas is all about.

Attraction is there, so you have become a sannyasin; and fear is there, so you are trying to avoid still. Hesitantly, you take one step towards Me and one step away from me. This hesitation can destroy this opportunity. Jumping from a high building from a window is not going to help. But now the window is available for which you have been hankering, and you can jump, and you can die and be reborn.

The second question

I don't understand what you say, Osho, but while sitting alone or in discourse something happens to me and tears start coming out of my eyes. What is this all, oh my master?

So you have started listening to me Shivananda, that's the way to listen to me--through tears. That's the way to listen to me--through love, through the heart. Pulsate with me. Let my words be drowned into your tears. You will not be at a loss, because what I am saying is not important. Far more important is some other energy that goes surrounding those words that reach you.

Don't pay too much attention to the words. If your heart is open, the energy will be released into the heart. My words are

just carriers, they are containers. The content is utterly different. The content is diametrically opposite. The container is the word, but the content is a wordless silence. It is my love. The word is just a capsule. The capsule is not the medicine; the medicine is inside it. Forget about the capsule. Drink me--and the best way to drink is to be with tears, because then you participate, then you come very very close.

Those tears are indicative that your heart starts pulsating with me, that there are moments when you start breathing just in tune with me--then suddenly those tears will arise. Those tears are symbolic. They are like flowers. Rejoice!

The third question

Why are your teachings not accepted as religion or religious by the society?

They are not religious or religion in the ordinary sense of the term. They are far more...they are far deeper and higher. The so-called society has no vision; it consists of blind people. It has always been happening.

When Buddha appeared, they didn't believe that his teachings were religious. When Jesus appeared, they crucified him. When Mansoor declared, "I am God," they killed him. Mohammedans thought Mansoor was one of the greatest irreligious persons who has ever been on the earth--to declare oneself God? This is kufr; this is irreligion, this is anti-religion.

Whenever it happens that something of the pure truth is expressed, is sung, the society starts becoming uneasy about it. It is natural, because the society has a very pseudo kind of religion--comfortable, convenient, consolatory. It has false temples to worship in, false gods to worship, false priests to follow. And it is very convenient because they don't disturb your life. You can remain a Christian. In fact, it never disturbs your life--on the contrary, it helps your life. The so-called society, the so-called society's rules, moralities--you fit better

if you are a Christian. But to follow Christ is dangerous.

No Christian ever follows Christ--cannot follow. In fact, being a Christian is a way of avoiding Christ. To be a Buddhist is a way of avoiding Buddha. If you really love Buddha, then you would like to become a Buddha, you would like to become a Buddhist. Why should one want to become a Christian? Either be Christ or forget all about it! But Christ is dangerous. He was not killed by immoral people, bad people; he was killed by good people, respectable people. Remember it always.

Buddha was not attacked by the criminals. He was attacked by those who you can never think of as criminals--good people, moral people, puritans. Why does it happen? Jesus is killed by rabbis, religious people, scholars, priests--in every way good. Their lives are completely clean, people who have character. And he was loved by people who have no character--a Magdalen.

Just a few days ago, a young woman came from Switzerland; her name is Magdalena. I didn't change her name--she took sannyas. I love that name, Magdalena. A prostitute followed Jesus, and rabbis killed him! Thieves and drunkards and gamblers followed Jesus, and rabbis killed him. All the so-called saints were against him and the so-called sinners were for him--what kind of world is this? What paradox? Why has it been happening always? There is a certain reason in it.

Whenever a new religion, a new dispensation arrives on the earth, whenever a new glimpse of God arrives on the earth, whenever a new window or door opens to God, it is accepted first by those who are not very respectable. Why? Because they have nothing to lose; they can accept. They can even accept truth--they have nothing to lose. What did Magdalen have to lose?

But the chief rabbi had much to lose. He had an investment in the old religion, the rotten religion, which

was dead and had been dead for long, was stinking; it was just a corpse--but he had an investment in it. He was the chief priest of it! If he follows Jesus he will not be the chief priest any more, and all the prerogatives that one has by being the chief priest will be lost. He has the most beautiful house, he has the best salary. He was the most respected person--why should he follow this vagabond, Jesus? It would have been just a loss for him.

Magdalen could follow Jesus. She had nothing to lose but to gain. A gambler, a drunkard, have nothing to lose but to gain. All great religions start with rebellious people. All great religions start with young people, because old people have investments. Their whole life they have been praying, worshipping, now suddenly they can't stop it. If they stop that means that their whole life has been wrong. To accept that goes against the grain, against the ego. So only a few rarely courageous old people can follow a Jesus, a Buddha--those who are so courageous that they can see the point and they can say, "Okay, so it was wrong and I drop it. My whole life was wrong and I start anew." To start anew in old age is very difficult, very difficult, because ahead there is only death, no time left--and you are starting something new? Great trust is needed--great trust in life, great trust in God, and adventurousness.

All great religions start with adventurous people,.young people, the downtrodden, oppressed, criminals, sinners. And all religions die when they become respectable and saints arrive and churches evolve--they die.

A new flower is opening up here. All the so-called religious people will be against it--they are against. They have to be against. All their investments, all their privileges, all their consolations--how can they risk so much? They will cling, they will fight with me--they are fighting with me. They are creating all kinds of troubles for me. You may not be aware because I never talk about it, because what is the point? I never say anything about it--

you may not be at all aware of what kinds of troubles continuously go on being created.

For one year continuously I have been trying to find a place to move to, but they go on creating troubles--some legal troubles, some other troubles. And the politicians are with them, and the priests are there and all the respectable people are with them. And they have power; they can create a thousand and one troubles. They don't want the commune to be established because they are very much afraid: once the commune is there and the work really starts--because this is just an introduction--when the real work starts, then all those who are courageous anywhere in the world are going to come. Thousands and thousands of people are going to come and be transformed. I just need a right situation, a Buddhafield. So they are creating in every way, every kind of trouble.

And the more my work spreads, the more troubles will be coming, because the more they will become apprehensive, afraid.

You ask me: *Why are your teachings not accepted as religion or religious?*

How can they be accepted as religion and religious? It is pure religion--that's why it cannot be accepted as religious. I am not Hindu, otherwise they would have been very happy. They would have loved you all if I had been Hindu. They would have said, "Look! Our religion is so great--so many people from all over the world, from all the races, are being converted to Hinduism." They would have worshipped you. They would have invited you to stay in their houses. They would have bragged about it in their papers, magazines, books, radio stations, TV. They would have bragged, "Look! See the beauty and the grandeur of Hinduism--so many people are being converted to Hinduism!" But I am not a Hindu.

They have to repress everything that is happening here; it should not reach to anybody. Nobody should hear about it, what is happening here. Or if somebody hears, then some wrong information has to be given, in such a way that nobody becomes attracted to come here.

I am not a Mohammedan, I am not a Jain, I am not a Christian. I am not a Buddhist, so naturally all those people are against me. They are all joined at least in one thing: they are all against me. About that they have no differences. The Hindu and Mohammedan, the Christian and the Jain, they are all together about one thing, at least about one thing they agree, at least I have given them one thing to agree about: that this man is wrong.

What I am saying is rebellion. It is going to destroy their very foundation. Hence, they cannot accept it as religion. They will deny, they will fight. They will try to crush this opening bud. They will be against you. You will have to face a thousand and one difficulties. That's the risk you take by being with me, and that is the challenge too. And that challenge is going to become a blessing to you.

Those who will be able to accept the challenge and be with me, and those who will be so much in love with me that they can suffer for me, they will grow. They will grow to infinite heights. They will know something which is not ordinarily known by human beings. It is not available in the churches, it is not available in the temples. It becomes available only when a master lives and when a disciple allow s himself to be so open to the master that the master starts living in the disciple too, when this transfer of energy happens....

They think they know what religion is; they have certain definitions. I don't fit in any of their definitions. Naturally. how can they call it religion?

And just see, then it will be clear to you: Christianity cannot believe that Buddhism is a religion, because they have a definition and Buddhism does not fit in it. How can

there be a religion without God? So Christians cannot call Buddhism a religion. At the most, they can accept it as a morality, but not as a religion. How can there be a religion without God? And ask the Buddhist, "Is Christianity a religion?" and he says, "No--how can a religion be there when people are so stupid that they believe in God? They have not known anything. How can a religious person believe in God?" Buddhism has its definition. To believe in God means a deluded person, a person in hallucination, a person who is pathological, who needs psychiatric treatment.

Ask the Jains and they will not agree that Christianity is a religion or Buddhism is a religion. And ask the Mohammedans...nobody will agree that the other religion is a religion. What is the problem? They have a certain definition, a fixed idea. If something fits with that idea, it is religion; if it doesn't fit, it is not religion.

So whenever a new insight arises...and new insights continuously arise. They have to arise because old insights slowly slowly become so much rusty, so much dusty, become covered with so many interpretations, jargon, that they lose aliveness. New insights have to go on coming. When a new insight comes, certainly it will not fit with any definition available--then it cannot be called religion.

Each new religion has to create itself and its definition. Remember it. When my orange people have spread all over the world, and we have millions of orange people, then it will be a religion because we will have created our definition of what religion is.

Definition comes later on. First the religion has to come; first the religion has to penetrate people's hearts, then slowly slowly definition arises. Definition is not there ready-made beforehand. Each Buddha has to create his religion, the definition, the following, the field, and it always has to be started from ABC, from scratch. No old temple can be used for it--the new temple has to be raised.

And not only that, but the old temple has to be erased, destroyed, because only when the old temple is no more a temple in people's eyes do they start searching again, do they start groping for the new again.

So it is very natural that my approach will not be thought of as religion, as religious. It depends on you: if you start living what I am saying, you will be creating the definition. It depends on you. It solely depends on you! What I am saying, if you become one with it and you start living it in its totality, sooner or later the definition will follow. But who cares about it? Live what I am saying! Don't be worried what people think about it.

The fourth question
Why do your statements seem to me to be arrogant?

It has always been so. It will always be so. When Jesus said, "I and my father are one," do you think people thought he was a very humble man? When Jesus said, "I am the truth, the way, the door," do you think the rabbis came rushing and fell at his feet and said, "Such a humble man! Never seen before." They said, "This man is arrogant. This man is egoistic."

And logically, they look right--this looks like arrogance! When Krishna said to Arjuna, "Sarva dharma parityajya mamekam sharanam vraja--leave all the religions aside and come and fall unto my feet," do you think people thought this a humble statement? "Leave all religions aside and fall unto my feet!" This is pure arrogance.

And you will be surprised. It is said that the first words of Gautam the Buddha were...the legend has it that when Buddha was born he exclaimed, "Above the heavens and below the heavens, I alone am the honoured one--I alone am the honoured one." When he was born, just a child, the first assertion--not that he became Buddha, then he declared this. The legend is beautiful! The first-day child, the first moment's

assertion, expression, he declared to the world, "Above the heavens and below the heavens, I alone am the honoured one."

What do you think about it? That it is sheer arrogance?

Truth is truth. It is neither arrogant nor humble. It has to be declared as it is. It can appear humble to you if you understand; it will appear arrogant to you if you don't understand. And if you don't understand, then there is no need to go to such statements which apparently look arrogant. People who don't understand or don't want to understand can find arrogance anywhere.

Once it happened, I read these words of Lao Tzu, to a professor: "When the superior man hears of the Tao, he practises it; when the ordinary man hears of the Tao, he ignores it; when the inferior man hears of the Tao, he laughs at it. If it were not laughed at it would not be the true Tao."

And do you know what the professor said? He said, "How arrogant of Lao Tzu--who does he think he is to know? He thinks himself the superior man? the sage? that he knows? How arrogant of him to claim that he knows Tao! So Lao Tzu thinks," he said, "he is one of the superior who really understands the Tao, while lesser people ignore or laugh at it? How arrogant!"

Now it is not very apparent. You could not have thought this way, but it can be interpreted this way.

Just to see the resistance of the professor, I quoted Jesus to him.Jesus said: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

And what did he say? He said, "These words are also arrogant. Who does this guy, Jesus, think he is, taking such a superior, condescending, arrogant, forgiving attitude?"

Now, it is not apparent, but it can be found. If you search, you can say this man is arrogant--who does he think he is? "Father, forgive them...." Who are you to forgive?

That's exactly what Friedrich Nietzsche used to say against Jesus, "He was the most arrogant man. He is saying

to God: Forgive these foolish people because they know not what they do--they are all foolish, forgive them! He is insulting them. He does not even allow them the dignity of knowing what they are doing; he does not think them human beings. He is treating them as if they are worms--forgive them--this holier-than-thou attitude."

Friedrich Nietzsche used to say that Jesus has said that when somebody hits one of your cheeks, give him the other. And Nietzsche said this is very very inhuman, because that makes you look very superior. Looked at from Nietzsche's viewpoint, when somebody hits your face and you give him the other check, this is inhuman. The human way is: Hit him back! At least give him that much respect that "You are also a human being, as much as I am; we are equals." Giving him the other check means you have reduced the man to a worm. This is really insulting. This way it can be interpreted.

My statements are neither arrogant nor humble, because they can't be arrogant and they can't be humble. Ordinarily you think humbleness is opposite to arrogance. It is not. Humbleness and arrogance are both the same. They are like hot and cold--degrees of the same energy.

The humble person has as much ego as the arrogant person. The arrogant person claims the ego, the humble person denies the ego--but the ego is there. The arrogant person says, "I am special," and the humble person says, "I am nobody, sir--just the dust underneath your feet." One is claiming, the other is also claiming in a different way.

When you really see your nature, ego disappears, and with ego disappear arrogance and humbleness--both disappear. Jesus is neither humble nor arrogant. Buddha is neither humble nor arrogant. They simply state the fact. Now, it depends on you how you interpret it.

You say:

Why do your statements seem to me to be arrogant?

There must be something in you that is creating the trouble,

something in you that is resisting, fighting. Look deep inside yourself. And once you have seen what is creating this idea in you, you will be free of it. Then things will be very simple.

Just similarly, another question is there:

Why did you attack Sivananda? How do you know his method does not work? What right have you to judge him?

To call a spade a spade is not to attack it. I have not attacked any Sivananda; I have simply said whatever is the case. But you must have some attachment with Sivananda. Your attachment is feeling hurt. It has nothing to do with Sivananda! Something inside you is feeling hurt. Look into your own wound.

And you say: *How do you know his method does not work--because no method ever works. It is not a question of his method--even my methods...no method ever works! And because he believed that methods work, that's why I say he was a stupid person.*

Methods we use, because there are people just like you who need methods, who cannot go easily, simply into reality, who can only go the hard way. If you tell them to sit silently, they can't understand it. They say, "Then, just by sitting silently? Is something going to happen just by sitting silently?" They cannot sit silently--and all happens only when you sit silently.

Sitting silently, doing nothing,
The spring comes
And the grass grows by itself;

This is the ultimate truth. But you cannot let it grow. You say, "I cannot just sit and let the grass grow--I have to pull the grass upwards!" So I say, "Okay, then follow Sivananda, then do something. Then jump, do Kundalini. Or if that

does not feel enough, then do Dynamic, Chaotic. Or if you have some other karmas to suffer, then go to Encounter."

These methods are used here just because of your stupidities. Their whole function is to make you so tired of doing that one day you come to me and say, "Osho, can't I sit silently?" That's all. I go on sending you into groups and meditations and tortures and go on waiting...some day you will come crying and weeping and crawling and you will say, "Enough is enough! Can't I sit silently?" And I will say, "I have been waiting for this moment.

Sitting silently, doing nothing,
The spring comes
And the grass grows by itself;

No method ever helps. How can a method help? A method can help to create something unnatural. Nature has not to be created--it is already there. It has to be lived, enjoyed, danced, sung. It is already there! You need not do anything. The grass is already growing. The spring has come! But you cannot sit silently. You have so much restlessness--that restlessness needs methods.

I give you methods, not because through methods you will become enlightened, but through methods you will come to know how stupid you are--and that is great enlightenment!

I have heard about a politician: He went to a master, a Sufi master, and asked, "You had told me to meditate, to pray, this and that, and I do, but no revelation ever happens."

The master looked at him and said, "Go outside and stand in the street tor ten minutes." It was raining hard.

The politician said, "Stand in the street when it is raining so much?

The master said, "Just go and a revelation is going to come."

And the politician thought, "When the revelation is

going to come then it is worth trying. Ten minutes just standing in the falling rain is not such a big problem."

He stood there. He looked stupid, because people were passing and they thought, "What is our Prime Minister doing?" But be kept his eyes closed, and he looked again and again at his watch--ten minutes was a long time because a crowd gathered and people started laughing. They were puzzled, "What has happened to the Prime Minister?"

And then he rushed into the house and told the master, "Nothing happened! You deceived me."

The master said, "But just tell me how you felt?'

He said, "I felt like a very stupid person standing there, absolutely stupid!"

He said, "This is a great revelation! What do you think? In just ten minutes' time to come to know that you are a very stupid person--don't you think it a great revelation?"

This is what happens in meditations, in yoga, in therapy groups--slowly slowly this understanding penetrates your heart: "What am I doing? Shouting, screaming, fighting--what am I doing?" Just that very revelation and you can see the point, and then you can sit silently. And all that you need is already available.

That's why I said that his methods don't work--not that somebody else's methods work. No method ever works.

And what right have you to judge him?

I have not judged him. I have simply said what he is! What judgement are you talking about? I have not condemned him. To call a spade a spade is not to condemn it. I am simply factual.

But the question is from Mark. He must be a new person here. He can't understand me; he has no participation with me yet. He must have felt offended. He may be following things like Sivananda's, something like that. His ego is hurt. Rather than saying, "My ego is hurt," he has changed the question. That is a camouflage; that is utterly

meaningless. If something is going to happen between me and Sivananda, that is my business--don't you be worried. If you meet some time, then it is for us to decide whether I should have judged him or not, or why I called him stupid. He can ask me, but why should you be worried?

You must have something else inside; this is just a rationalization. You may be doing those kinds of methods. But ego is so subtle, it protects itself. You have made a question in such a way that you can hide--but you cannot hide from me. Mark, mark it! you cannot hide from me. And remember, I never miss the mark. You are going to be caught. Now you cannot escape, because if you have been doing these things, then how long will it take for you to realize, how long will it take for you to allow the revelation to happen? And I have made all kinds of methods available here, all kinds of nonsense that you can get anywhere in the world. Even people are coming from Californialand--here!

The sixth question

What is the difference between being totally surrendered and being a brainless robot?

Vadan, a brainless robot cannot surrender. .And those who find it very difficult to surrender are brainless robots. To surrender, great understanding is needed, great intelligence.

You will be surprised to know that the more stupid a person is, the less possibility of surrender. Idiots can't surrender, although those who can't surrender think they are very intelligent and that's why they are not surrendering. But have you ever heard of any idiot surrendering? Imbeciles cannot surrender, retarded people cannot surrender.

The highest intelligence is needed to surrender--to see the point that "I have been running in circles. If I go on

depending on myself, I will go on running in the same circles again and again." The only possibility to get out of the wheel is to take somebody else's hand, somebody who is outside the vicious circle. To take that support is what surrender is.

Down the ages it has been thought that the intelligent person can't surrender, that it is the gullible who surrenders. That is not so. Modern research says something else: it is only the very very intelligent who can surrender. The gullible believes, but does not surrender. The intelligent surrenders, does not believe. And the difference is great.

You can believe without surrendering; then the belief is just a lip-service. You say yes on the surface, and deep down you go on doing whatsoever you are doing.

To be surrendered means you have said yes from the circumference to the very core. You have become a yes from the center to the circumference. There is only one quality of consciousness: yes. And immediately, in this yes, you come out of the ego--because ego exists on no, ego feeds on no. The more you say no, the more ego is strengthened. No is the food for the ego: yes is the food for egolessness.

It is a simple phenomenon! But only very very intelligent people can understand it.

Have you observed? Whenever you say no, you feel very clearly that you are. That's why people enjoy saying no. When there is no need, even then they will say no. The child asks the mother, "Can I go out to play?" and she says, "No!" Now there is no need to say no. And she knows perfectly well that the child is not going to listen either. And the child also knows perfectly well that if he creates some tantrum she is going to say yes, so he creates some tantrum. But the mother says no. She feels good by saying no. And then the child starts saying no to the mother, because that is how he creates his ego.

That's why parents and children are always in conflict.

Teachers and students are always in conflict. The universities are not just accidentally burning all over the world--the conflict is that the teacher says no and the student says no. Two no's fighting. Husbands and wives are fighting continuously--two no's fighting. And each has to say no. And ego feels very hurt. Watch: whenever you have to say yes, it feels that you are defeated, the other is a winner. Then you try to find a situation where you can again say no and remain with your no and force the yes on the other.

This is how the ego exists. The day the child learns to say no is the beginning of the ego. Before that there was primal innocence. Before that the child was in trust; he had no idea of who he is. There was utter silence and peace and joy and celebration. The day he says no, something closes up; he becomes defensive, he creates an armour. And now he starts saying as many no's as possible.

If the parents say, "Don't smoke," he will smoke. If the parents say, "Don't do this," he will have to do it. The rebellion has started. He has to become an ego.

Surrender means: you have lived through the ego and you have seen the futility of it, you have seen the utter misery of it. You have lived through the ego and you know that you have not been able to live through it. It does not allow you to live, because it does not allow you any expansion. It makes you smaller and smaller and smaller; it encages you deeper and deeper. It puts you into a windowless state, all openings disappear. You start living in a kind of grave. To surrender means to see this! and then to find a person with whom it will be easier to say yes, a person who has had a glimpse of the real man and to whom love has happened, who has become love.

If you can find a man with whom you can say yes easily, you have found your master. This is the criterion for how one has to decide that one has come across a master: if you can say yes easily, simply, innocently. The presence of the man

makes you feel to say yes. No becomes difficult--even if you want to say no out of old habit and structure, you hesitate, you find it hard to say. And yes comes easy, like a flood. And whenever you say yes, great joy arises; and whenever you say no, you feel great misery, as if you have harmed yourself.

Whenever you have found a person with whom this starts happening, you have found the master. Then forget about the whole world, what they say about the master! You have found the master. He may not be the master for others, hut he is the master for you. Disappear into him.

What is the difference between being totally surrendered and being a brainless robot?

A robot can never surrender, not even partially. Only an utterly intelligent person can surrender. And, of course, in the beginning it is partial; slowly slowly, one gathers more and more courage. The more one tastes the joys of it, the more one adventures, explores into it. And the man of utter intelligence surrenders totally.

In that surrender, the ego disappears. Not that in that surrender you become a slave to the master--there is nobody to make you a slave. In fact, because there was nobody to make you a slave, that's why you were feeling so beautiful in saying yes to the man. If there was somebody to make you a slave you would have naturally felt it impossible to say yes. His ego would have offended your ego. There is a subtle interaction between egos.

If the man has helped you to surrender, that simply means that there was nobody to offend you. There was pure love, there was nobody trying to possess you. You were not being cowed down. And once you have surrendered the ego, you will be surprised that there is nobody to take possession of you--the ego has disappeared. The master and the surrender was just a device. You have attained to primal

innocence. Now you can move on your own.

When the master sees that you have surrendered totally, he makes you absolutely free. He says, "Now there is no need, now there is no question of surrender." Once surrendered, then there is no need for any surrender. The need for surrender is because of the ego--once the disease has disappeared, the medicine has to be thrown. The master takes it himself.

And then you are free of ego alld free of egolessness. That's what Ikkyu calls real emptiness: you are empty of everything and empty of emptiness too. Ego has gone and egolessness has also gone. Now there is nobody...absolute nothingness. And the purity of it and the benediction of it are such that if you don't taste it in this life, you have wasted it again.

The seventh question
If I disappear, who will pay the rent?

Let the other party bother. Why should you be worried? But my feeling is that you have not asked the question rightly. You must be worried about those who have to pay the rent to you--if they disappear.

It happened: A man came to a psychoanalyst and he was very much worried and going berserk. The psychiatrist asked, "What is your problem really?"

He said, "I am worried. The worry is that I have to pay ten thousand dollars I owe to people. And there seems to be no way! And I am thinking to commit suicide, because this is becoming too heavy and I cannot live with this heaviness."

And the psychoanalyst said, "Don't you be worried. Just look at me: I had to pay one thousand dollars to a man. I simply dropped the idea of paying and all worry disappeared."

And the man said, "I know it--I know about it. You tell me something else."

The psychoanalyst asked, "How do you know it?"

He said, "I am the man to whom you were going to pay $1000--that too is part of my worry. This won't help! You give me some other idea."

Why are you worried: If I disappear who will pay the rent? Is rent so very important? Are you here only to pay the rent?

I have heard:

The Scotsman was visiting London for the day and called upon a lady of pleasure in Soho and, after he had partaken of her bodily delights, he gave her a hundred pounds.

"Why, that's incredibly generous of you!" exclaimed the surprised lady. "No man has ever given me so much. And yet, from your accent you sound Scottish, which makes it even more incredible for you to be generous. Which part of Scotland do you come from?"

"From Edinburgh," replied the Scotsman.

"How fantastic! My father works in Edinburgh."

"I know," said the Scotsman. "When your father heard was coming to London he gave me a hundred pounds to give to you."

Do you come from Scotland?! What part? Thinking of paying the rent? There is nobody to pay the rent, there is nobody to be paid--there is really no rent either, no house either. That's what Ikkyu says--all is dream.

Have you not heard this: A madman was asked, "What are the differences between psychoanalysts, psychologists and psychiatrists?"

The madman said, "Psychologists build castles in the air, psychoanalysts live in them, and psychiatrists collect the rent."

What are you talking about? Forget all about it! Disappear!

And remember, when you disappear as an ego, that does not necessarily mean that you disappear from the world--the world continues. Kabir disappeared as an ego but continued to remain a weaver, continued to work, but now it is no longer serious, now it is just a dream. If others are enjoying, why disturb them? You can disappear and still pay the rent. Don't be worried about it--unless you don't want to pay the rent and only for that you want to disappear. That is another matter. Otherwise, what is the problem? You disappear and still pay the rent!

If I disappear, who will pay the rent?

Yesterday you talked of natural and unnatural. Money, it seems, must come into the unnatural category. With the ego and the mind, it is relatively easy to deal with it. But if we are to live in the marketplace and to live naturally, will money not become problem?

Money is not a problem at all--unless you want to make it a problem. Down the ages, the so-called religious people have been very much worried about money. Such a foolish thing like money! and so much worried. Play with it! If you have it, enjoy; if you don't have it, enjoy. What else can you do when you don't have it? Enjoy! When you have it, what else can you do? Enjoy! Don't make unnecessary problems about it. Money is a toy. Sometimes you have it--play with it.

But my feeling is: people who can't play with money, they renounce money--they are very serious about it. Then they become very much afraid about money, because deep down clinging is there.

Do you know? The chief disciple of Mahatma Gandhi, Vinoba Bhave, can't look at money. If you bring a one rupee note--which is worthless, which has no money in it, not at all--he closes his eyes. Now what kind of attitude is this? And this is thought to be very saintly; it is praised all over the country, that he is so free of money. If you are really free of money, why do you close the eyes? Is that one rupee note

so attractive that you have to close your eyes? Is there some fear that if you don't close your eyes you may jump upon the man? Something must be there. This looks a little obsessive. There is great fear--otherwise why close your eyes? So many things are passing and you don't close your eyes--just poor money.

And money is nothing--just a device to exchange things. But people who are really misers deep down, clingers, because of their clinging, their miserliness, they are very much in despair, in misery. Finally, one day, they think that it is money that is causing their misery. It is not money that is causing your misery. How can money cause your misery? It is miserliness that is causing your misery. Thinking that it is money that is causing misery, they renounce money, they escape from the world of money. Then they are continuously afraid; then in their dreams they must be entering into banks and opening treasures and things like that--and making love to money. That is bound to happen.

Money is not a problem! It can be used! If you have it, use it; if you don't have it, then use that freedom that comes when you don't have the money. This is my approach. If you are rich, enjoy; richness has a few things which no poor person can enjoy. I have been both rich and poor, and I tell you honestly, there are a few things only rich people can enjoy. Enjoy when you are rich. And I tell you again, I have been both rich and poor, and there are a few things which only poor people can enjoy. And there is no way to enjoy both together.

So, whenever, whatsoever is happening, enjoy it. A poor person has a kind of freedom. Poverty has a kind of cleanness, a relaxedness, contentedness. Mind is not very much worried; there is nothing to worry about. You can sleep perfectly well; insomnia is impossible for a poor man. So sleep well and snore, and enjoy the freedom that comes from poverty.

And sometimes when you find yourself rich, enjoy

richness, because there are a few things only a rich person can enjoy. You can have the greatest paintings on your walls; a poor man cannot have that. You can have the best music in your house; the poor man cannot have that. You create a Zen garden around your house; the poor man cannot have that. You can read poetry, you can paint, you can play on the guitar, you can sing, you can dance, you can meditate--a thousand and one things that become available.

My approach is: whatsoever is the case, just see what you can make out of it. If it is poverty, become a Buddha, start wandering; take a begging-bowl--and enjoy that beauty that only a beggar can have. He belongs nowhere. Today he is here, tomorrow he is gone. He is a flow; he clings nowhere, he has no home. He need not worry that the rains are coming and the roof has to be fixed. He need not worry that somebody may steal something from him--he has nothing.

Enjoy poverty when you are poor, and enjoy richness--then become a Janaka, an emperor, and enjoy all the beauties that become available through money.

My approach is total. I don't teach you to choose. I simply say: whatsoever is the case, the intelligent person will make something beautiful out of it. The unintelligent person suffers. If he has money he suffers because money brings worries; he does not enjoy the music that money can bring, the dance that money can bring, the painting. If he has money, he does not go to the Himalayas for a rest, to meditate and to sing and to shout in the valleys and to talk with the stars. He worries, loses his sleep, loses his appetite--he chooses the wrong when he has money. And this man, if somehow he becomes poor, by God's grace if he becomes poor, then he suffers poverty. Then he is continuously worried that "I don't have this and I don't have that." You have poverty! Enjoy it!

But there are people who are wrong in every situation: wherever they are, they will always chose the negative part

of it, and they will suffer. And there are people, and I call those people intelligent people, and I would like my people to be intelligent people...wherever you are, try to enjoy it.

In my childhood it happened: once my father was very angry, so he locked me into the bathroom. I meditated!--what is the point...? After three, four hours, he became worried. He was at the shop, but he was restless. He became worried about what had happened to me, and no message had come from the home--mother had not sent any message, no servant had come to say what had happened to me. Have I disappeared? or what? Or has somebody opened the bathroom? So he could not do his work there; he had to come.

He came close and he listened and there was silence. He knocked and I told him, "Don't disturb me." That was the last time he punished me that way. It is pointless! He said, "I became so worried I could not do my work in the shop--I had to come."

I said. "This is nonsense!--I enjoyed it."

In my school when I was small, second grade, my teacher was a very strict one and he used to punish by giving: "Go running seven times round the school, run!" And he gave me this punishment--go seven times--I said, "Why not seventeen?" He said, "Are you mad?" I said, "This is such a good exercise and every morning I would like to do it."

And I started doing it every morning. He would see me and he would beat his head--he would say this.... I destroyed his punishment by making it an exercise. I used it! Then he stopped giving me punishment.

Why not use an opportunity, whatsoever it is? And if you are alert you can find opportunities everywhere--even if you are imprisoned you can use that as a great opportunity. And there are people who are under the sky, free, and not using that opportunity.

Money or no money, house or no house...the question is

not what you should have: the question is what you should do, whatsoever you have.

See, my emphasis is totally different. You disappear...and then let things happen. If you feel good to be in the marketplace, then that is natural, because there are born shopkeepers. Don't think that there are only born poets--that is wrong;. There are born shopkeepers too. Whatsoever you make of them, they will become shopkeepers; wherever they are they will open a shop. They cannot avoid it.

Have you not heard about the Jew?

A ship was moving and it was attacked by a crocodile--a great crocodile, a very great crocodile. And they started throwing things in her mouth--chairs and things, tables and a bag of oranges, and finally the Jew. But again and again the crocodile came to attack. Finally they decided, "This is not going to help. We go on giving it things; just for a few moments the crocodile becomes engaged, and again it comes." So all together they attacked and cut open the belly of the crocodile--and what did they see? Do you know? The Jew was sitting on the chair, the table was in front of him, he had opened the bag of oranges and he was selling to other people who had been swallowed by the crocodile before.

You cannot escape...where will you go? There are born shopkeepers. So if you are a born shopkeeper, even when you have disappeared you will be in the marketplace. But then it will have a totally different quality to it--you will enjoy it. It is God's world! a beautiful dream. You will know those customers are dream customers, and the thing? that you are giving to them are just dream, and the money that you are collecting is just dream--but why not enjoy it? That enjoyment is not dream.

Let me remind you again: everything is dream, but if you can consciously enjoy it, that joy is not dream--that joy is

the goal of all religions. And you can enjoy more if everything is a dream. Then there is nothing to be worried about. If success comes, good; if failure comes, good.

The last question

I know that I am not my body, but still I want to love and be loved. Is spiritual love possible in this rotten world?

This world is not rotten. This world is full of God--or, in Buddha's words: full of nothingness, which is the same. If anything is rotten, it is your mind. And, yes, it is very difficult with a rotten mind to find love.

And never think in terms of spiritual and material love--love is simply love. It is neither material nor spiritual. How can love be material or spiritual? Love is simply love. Love means the joy of sharing your life with somebody. Yes, your body can be shared, your being can be shared--but sharing is love, not what you share. Sharing is love. So all love is simply love.

But I can see the problem must be coming from your upbringing: I know that I am not my body...who told you? You are more your body than your mind. You are more your body than your so-called self. That's what Ikkyu is saying: that self is a false entity, rotten. And the mind is just a phenomenon conditioned by the society. Your body is truer than your mind and than your self; your body belongs to existence.

But you must have been contaminated by the priests that you are not the body. They have created a dichotomy in everybody that "You are the soul, and how can a soul fall so much as to love a body?" And you will not find ghosts around here--you will find people who live in their bodies, who are their bodies.

That's why you cannot find somebody to love and by loved by--you are in search of a ghost. And I don't think if you really come across a ghost that you will like it. But

that's what you are hankering for. You have been told to condemn your body; and if you condemn your body and if you don't like your body, do you think somebody else is going to like it? If even you don't like it, who is going to like it? By liking your body, by loving your body, you create a situation in which somebody else can also love your body. But you create that milieu, that climate.

A man or a woman who hates his own body...and that's how you hate deep down, because from the very beginning you have been told to hate the body--body is something ugly, body is something unspiritual. You have been taught that the body is the enemy. The body is the temple of God. In this body lives that nothingness Buddha talks about; in this body lives that seed of enlightenment I go on talking about. This body contains your greatest joy, this body contains God. Don't condemn it, otherwise it will be impossible.

You say: I know that I am not my body, but still I want to love and be loved.

That desire is natural!--to love and to be loved. That is part of human consciousness, an intrinsic part of it, built in. The society can contaminate your ideas about the body, but it cannot destroy your desire to be loved and to love. So that desire continues. But now it becomes impossible because that desire can be fulfilled only through the body. So you are in a fix.

Either drop the idea of love...which you cannot do, which nobody can do, because we are made of the stuff called love. It is impossible to drop it. Just let me remind you again: a single glimpse of the real man, and you are in love. Even at the ultimate stage, love explodes, love remains; you really become totally loving.

So you cannot drop that. That is your destiny; that has to be fulfilled. But if you condemn your body, it is very difficult. You want to go to the other shore and you condemn the bridge. You want to go to the other shore and

you condemn the boat. Now, how are you going to manage it? The bridge can take you to the other shore. The bridge can take you beyond the bridge. The boat can take you beyond the boat, but only the boat can take you.

Love your body. Accept yourself as your body. Receive it with gratitude, it is a gift. Otherwise it will be impossible. And even if somebody falls in love with you--the question is from a woman--if somebody falls in love with you, you will not allow him to love you. If he wants to hold your hand, you will shrink back. You will think, "Here comes a hedonist, a materialist. He wants to hold my hand! He should only hold my ghost hand, spiritual hand, not my real hand. This is just the rotten body." And he wants to hug you and you will escape because this is that same rotten lust. You won't allow anybody to approach you.

And, naturally, when a person wants to have communion with you, he would like to hold your hand. It is not that he wants just to hold your hand--it is through the hand that something else is contacted. It is not necessarily so that it will be contacted, but there is no other way to contact it either. When he holds your hand, he is holding something of you--and there is no way to hold it without holding your hand. If he hugs you, he is hugging your soul; but the body is the visible part of the soul. It is through the body that you communicate.

Even if silence has to be communicated, words have to be used. Words are the body of the silence; silence is the soul. Even I have to use words, Buddha has to use words.

Drop that conditioning. And drop the idea that this world is rotten, because if it is rotten then nothing is going to happen in it. You have already become prejudiced.

Meditate over this anecdote:

Cuthbert married a very refined virgin from an impeccable background, and took her away to Tunis for their honeymoon.

On the first night in their hotel, Cuthbert quickly

stripped off all his clothes and jumped into bed and then watched while his wife slowly removed all her garments.

But Cuthbert was rather surprised when she clambered into bed completely naked except for her white gloves.

"Why don't you take your gloves off?" he asked.

"Because mummy said that I might actually have to touch the beastly thing," she replied.

Now, this type of mind is not going to know what love is. This type of mind is closed, absolutely closed. And this type of mind is there in everybody, more or less. Drop this mind.

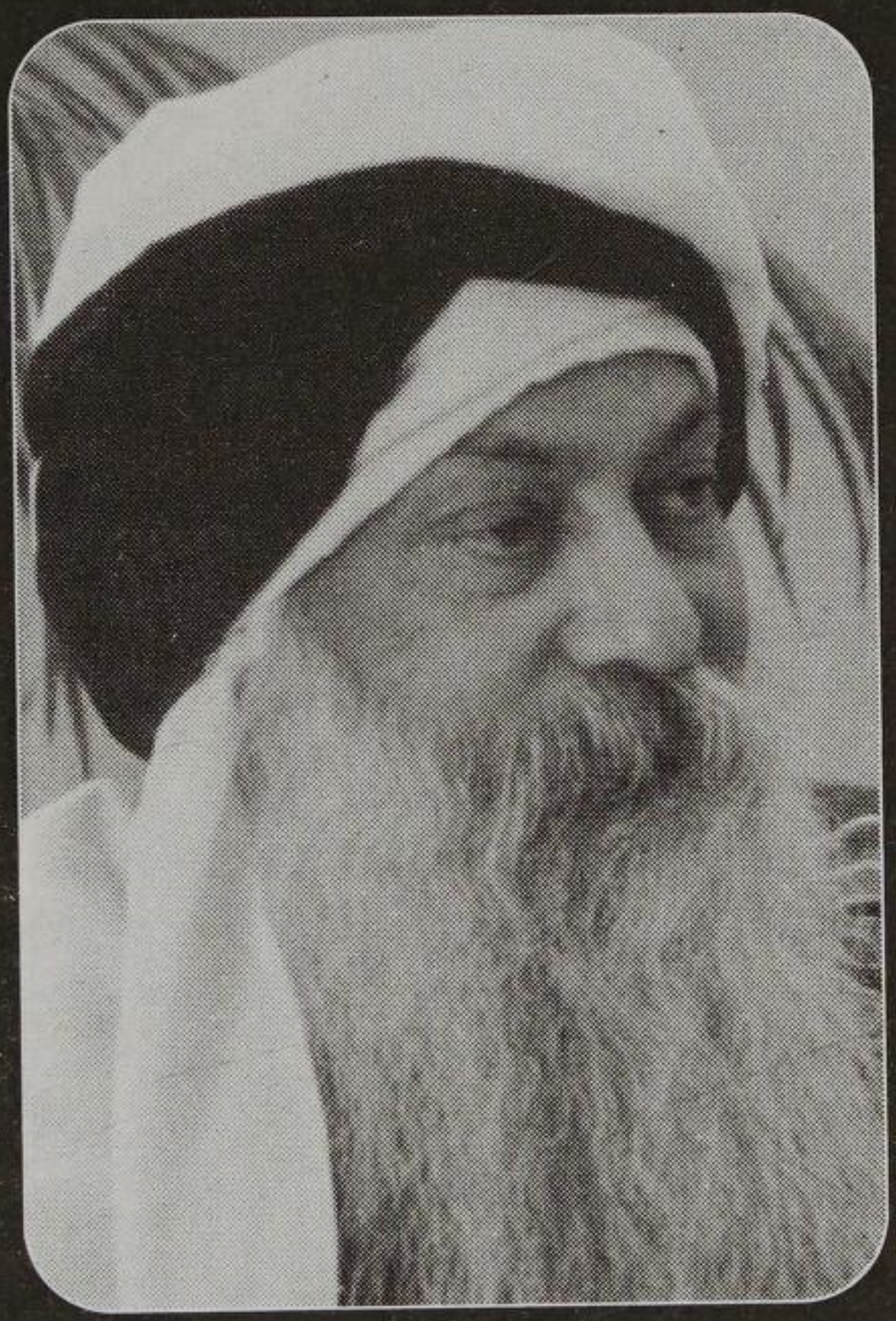
All is good and all is divine--body is included. The whole body is included. Never make any distinction between body of the lower and the higher--there is nothing lower and nothing higher. The whole body is one, it is a unity. Accept it, welcome it, and you will start blooming, and you will start radiating love. And that radiating love will attract others towards you.

You must not be attracting; you must have become very very repulsive. The idea that this world is rotten, that "I am not my body," that "I want some spiritual kind of love," are all wrong ideas. They will poison your whole life.

And I know there is a love that goes far beyond the ordinary forms, but that love is not against the ordinary forms--it is based, rooted, in the ordinary forms. The tree goes very high in the sky and starts whispering with the stars, but it remains rooted in the earth. The tree blooms into beautiful flowers, but it remains rooted into the earth, in the dark earth, with a thousand and one roots, invisible.

God is rooted in matter, the spirit is rooted in matter. Never be against matter. Once you create this dichotomy--matter and spirit--you are forever going to remain a schizophrenic.

Bridge yourself. Come together! Become one piece. And out of becoming one piece, peace arises, love flows, life becomes a fragrance.



2

Do You Smell the Mountain Laurels?

My abiding place
Has no pillars;
It is roofless--
Yet the rain does not wet it,
Nor the wind strike it.

When it blows,
The mountain wind is boisterous,
But when it blows not,
It simply blows not.

Though it has no bridge,
The cloud climbs up to heaven;
It does not ask aid
Of Gautama's sutras.

Ripples appear
On the unaccumulated water
Of the undug well,
As the formless, bodiless man
Draws water from it.

The mind:
Since there is really
No such thing as mind,
With what enlightenment
Shall it be enlightened?

A story:

Zen master: "I have here a staff, and yet I don't have a staff. How would you explain that?"

Jewish novice: "I wouldn't!"

Master: "Now, don't be impertinent! It is incumbent on you--if you really wish to attain enlightenment as you claim--to make every possible effort to answer this."

Novice: "All right, I guess that looked at one way you have a staff; looked at another way you don't."

Master: "No, that is not what I mean at all! I mean that looked at exactly the same way, I have a staff and I don't have a staff. Now how do you explain that?"

Novice: "I give up!"

Master: "But you shouldn't give up! You should strain every ounce of your being to unravel this."

Novice: "I won't argue with you as to whether I should give up. The existential fact simply is that I do give up."
Master: "But don't you wish to attain enlightenment?"
Novice: "If attaining enlightenment means considering such damn-fool questions, then to hell with it! I am sorry to disappoint you, but good-bye!"

Twelve Years Later

Novice: "And so I return to you, oh master, in a state of

absolute contrition. For twelve years now I have been wandering about feeling terrible for my cowardice and impatience. I now realize that I can't keep running away from life. Sooner or later I have to face the ultimate problems of the universe. So now I am ready to steel myself and try to work in earnest on the problem you gave me.

Master: "What problem was that?"

Novice: "You said that you have a staff and yet you don't have a staff. How do I explain that?"

Master: "Is that what I really said? Why how silly of me!"

Zen has no teaching, Zen has no doctrine. Zen gives no guidance, because it says there is no goal. It says you are not to move into a certain direction. It says you are already there, so the more you try to reach there, the less is the possibility of reaching. The more you seek, the more you will miss. Seeking is the sure way of missing it.

Getting it simply means getting the point that it is already available, that it has already happened, that it is the very nature of existence.

Enlightenment is not a goal but the quality of being herenow. How can it be a goal? because the goal is never herenow--it is always therethen, it is always somewhere else. It is like the horizon: it is always distant and yet looks close by. And one feels that "If I travel a little bit, I will reach the horizon." But one never reaches, because the more you reach towards the horizon, the more the horizon goes on receding back--because in fact there is nothing. Just an illusion.

The earth and the sky are not meeting anywhere. They can't meet because they are not two, they can't meet because they are one. The earth is just a materialization of the space of the sky; it is a wave in the ocean of the sky. How can they meet? For meeting, at least two are needed. And they are not two. The horizon exists only in the mind of man; it has no existential truth in it. But you can go on searching and searching. And the more you feel that you

are not getting it, the more and more anxious you can become to find it. You can become mad after it.

Zen says: There is nowhere to go, so no guidance is needed. Then what is the purpose of a Zen master? His purpose is to bring you herenow. His purpose is to hit you so hard that you awake herenow. You have fallen asleep and you have started living in dreams.

Another story:

Zen student: "So, master, is the soul immortal or not? Do we survive our bodily death or do we get annihilated? Do we really reincarnate? Does our soul split up into component parts which get recycled, or do we as a single unit enter the body of a biological organism? And do we retain our memories or not? Or is the doctrine of reincarnation false? Is perhaps the Christian notion of survival more Correct? And if so, do we get bodily resurrected, or does our soul enter a purely Platonic spiritual realm?"

Master: "Your breakfast is getting cold."

That's the way of Zen: to bring you herenow. The breakfast is far more important than any paradise. The breakfast is far more important than any concept of God. The breakfast is more important than any theory of reincarnation, soul, rebirth, and all that nonsense. Because the breakfast is herenow.

For Zen, the immediate is the ultimate, and the imminent is the transcendental. This moment is eternity...you have to be awakened to this moment.

So Zen is not a teaching but a device--a device to disturb your dreaming mind, a device somehow to create such a state that you become alarmed, that you have to get up and see, to create such strain around you that you cannot remain comfortably asleep.

And this is the beauty of Zen and the revolution that Zen brings to the world. All other religions are consolations; they help you to sleep better. Zen tries to awake you; it has

no consolation at all. It does not talk about great things. Not that those great things are not there, but talking about them is not going to help.

People have a very stupid idea. They think...one of our favourite tricks is to pretend that by talking about a problem we are doing something about it. That is why psychoanalysis has become so important--and it is nothing but talking. The patient goes on talking about his problems and he thinks that by talking about his problems he is solving them.

People go on asking questions, and getting answers, and they think that by asking a question and getting an answer they are doing something about their real problem. Answers that are given by others are not going to help you; they may help you only as consolations,

You ask somebody, "Is there survival after death?" and he says, "Yes." And you are freed of a fear--the fear of death. And you start thinking the soul is immortal.

Just see the people who believe in the immortality of the soul: you will find they are the greatest cowards there are. In this country it has happened. Down the ages, at least for five thousand years, this country has been believing in the immortality of the soul, and for one thousand years this country remained in slavery. People had become so cowardly they could not rebel against it. Not a single revolution has ever happened in India.

People who believe in the immortality of the soul should be absolutely courageous; they can face death because they are not going to die. But the case is just the opposite. In fact, their belief in the immortality of the soul is nothing but a protection, is just an armour around their cowardice. They are afraid of death, hence they believe in the idea that the soul is immortal. They go on clinging to the idea--against death. They don't know.

If you ask a Zen master, "Is the soul immortal?" he will not answer, because he knows it is your fear that is asking

for the answer. Your fear wants to be calmed; you need a solace. You need somebody authoritative who can say, "Yes, don't be afraid." You need a father-figure.

It is not just a coincidence that Christians think of God as the father, or the Catholic priest is called 'the father'. Out of fear, .people are searching for the father. They need fathers here and they need a great Father up in the heavens. These people are childish, immature; they can't stand on their own. They can't live their lives on their own. They need someone to Lean to.

Zen does not talk about God. Not that God is not! but God is not a father. And God is not a mother either. You cannot conceive of God in any word. All your words are irrelevant. God can only be experienced in utter silence, in absolute silence. But there is no point in talking about it, because talking about it people start thinking they are doing great work. Then they read the scripture and they philosophize, and they go on polishing their concepts and doctrines, and go on believing. And nothing ever changes in their lives. Their belief never brings any light to their lives. In fact, their belief hinders the light.

Zen is not a belief system. It is a way of awakening. And the Zen master is bound to be tough. That is his compassion. He has to hit you. And he goes on finding devices how to hit you.

Just listen to this story:

A Zen master was worshipping at a statue of the Buddha. A monk came by and said, "Why do you worship the Buddha?"

"I like to worship the Buddha."

"But I thought you said that one cannot obtain enlightenment by worshipping the Buddha?"

"I am not worshipping the Buddha in order to obtain enlightenment."

"Then why are you worshipping the Buddha? You must

have some reason!"

"No reason whatsoever. I like to worship the Buddha."

"But you must be seeking something; you must have some end in view!"

"I do not worship the Buddha for any end."

"Then why do you worship the Buddha? What is your purpose in worshipping the Buddha?"

At this point, the master simply jumped up and gave the monk a good slap in the face!

It looks so wild, unexpected. And the monk is not asking any irrelevant question: he is asking a simple human question out of curiosity. He should not be treated like that; there is no need to hit him. No Hindu priest would hit him, no Catholic priest would hit him. Their purposes are different--only a Zen master can hit him. His purpose is different.

Why didn't he hit him in the first place? Why did he bother to answer so many questions and then hit him? He created the situation, the right situation. He created the heat. He created the curiosity more and more and more. He brought the monk to a state from where the hit could simply shock him to a kind of awareness.

He helped the monk to think about it more and more and more, to bring a peak of thinking--because only from the peak can the hit be of any help. But his hitting the monk is neither wild nor arrogant--it is not out of anger, remember. This story I have found in a book written by an American who thinks the master became angry because of the persistent query of the monk, and out of anger he hit him back. This is stupid. You have missed the whole point. It is not out of anger! He is not offended by the question; he is enjoying the question. He is bringing the monk to a more and more feverish state by answering in such a way that the question is not answered but enhanced. Just see the difference.

Ordinarily, you answer a question so that the question is finished. The Zen master is answering so that the question

becomes even more pointed and poignant. He is helping the question to arise with a totality. He is giving the idea to the monk that his question is very important and the master is unable to answer it. He is helping the ego of the monk to become a big balloon so a small prick and...the balloon bursts.

It is not out of anger; it has nothing to do with anger. He is not angry with the monk, he is not annoyed with the monk. He must be feeling perfectly happy with the monk that he has asked--now he is giving a chance for the master. But it is a device. He is not answering.

Even the slap is not the answer, remember. A few people start thinking as if the slap is the answer--that is not the answer either. The slap is just to give you a jerk, just to shake your foundations, so even if for a single moment you slip out of your thinking you will have a glimpse of reality. Then you will forget about God and about Buddha and worship...and you will just see that your breakfast is getting cold. You will come herenow.

Zen is an existential approach, not a philosophical approach towards life. And it has helped tremendously, it has brought many people to awakening.

Zen does not believe in analyzing a problem, because it does not believe that any problem can be solved at its own level. No problem can be solved unless your consciousness is raised a little higher than the problem. This has to be understood. This is something very fundamental.

You ask me a question. I can answer it, but you remain on the same level of consciousness. My answer cannot raise your consciousness. You ask, "Does God exist?" I can say yes or no--but you remain the same! Whether I say yes or no will not help you in any way to become more conscious. It will not give you more being; it will only give you more knowledge this way or that.

If you are an atheist and you ask, "Is there a God?" and I say no, you will feel very happy. You will say, "So I was

right." Or if I say yes, you will say, "This man is wrong. He does not know anything. He is just a blind person. I have argued, I have looked into the matter deeply, and I can't find any proof for God."

Whether I say yes or no, whether you are a theist or an atheist, either you will accumulate the knowledge, receive it if it fits with you, or, if it doesn't fit with you, you will reject it. That's what you are doing continuously in your mind. But your consciousness is not raised. And unless your consciousness is raised no problem can be solved. In the first place the problem is created because of your consciousness, and it can be solved, not by any answer--it can be solved only by helping your consciousness to go a little higher from where it is.

That's the work of Zen. It is not a transfer of knowledge--is a transfer of consciousness, being.

By slapping the monk, the master has simply helped the monk to become a little more alert. And if the monk becomes a little more alert, that slap is not only a slap--it is a Leap of the master's being into the disciple. But for that you need great love for the master, otherwise you will miss the slap. You need great trust in the Master.

This happens every day.

If I slap somebody, if I say something hard, if I hit somebody's ego, then out of a hundred cases ninety percent of people start reacting antagonistically. They miss the point! They missed a great opportunity. If sometimes I criticize you, that is a slap on your face. If sometimes I an hard on you, that is a slap on your face. Subtle slaps.

But humanity is no more interested in truth as much as it is interested in its ego. Immediately you are ready to leave. This man is not for you. A single slap, and you forget all about the search. Rather than becoming aware, alert, rather than receiving more consciousness and being, you simply close up.

Zen needs a particular atmosphere, a milieu--a milieu of

love, trust. That's why I insist that unless you are a sannyasin, my work cannot start on you.

Just the other day, somebody had written a letter, a beautiful letter; must be from a very good heart. He asked, "Can I not relate to you without becoming a sannyasin? Can I not just be a friend? Is it a must to be a disciple?" The question is relevant. You can be a friend to me; there is no problem in it. But you will miss as surely as the foes. The friend is going to miss as much as the foe--because when I slap you, you will not be able to awake. You will become angry because you don't expect that from a friend. When I hit you hard, you will simply be angry; you will retaliate. you will argue, you will fight back. You will simply say,

Then I am going!"

Sannyas simply means that you are ready to go with me even if I hit you. You are ready to go with me even if I crush you, annihilate you. You are ready to go with me to any limits. Your trust is more. Your trust is more in me than your trust in yourself. Then the work starts.

'The work' simply means you have become available to the master--only then can you be awakened. Because awakening is going to be painful. It is not going to be very sweet, you have slept so long, and you have dreamt so many beautiful dreams. And awakening is certainly going to destroy all those dreams. They are dreams, but you have thought up to now that they are realities. And when somebody starts taking them away from you it hurts. You start feeling that "I am getting nothing--on the contrary, I am losing all that I had before."

Zen is a particular milieu, a climate between the master and the disciple of trust, of love, of infinite love, so the disciple is ready to go to any end. You will be surprised: sometimes Zen masters have been really wild.

It happened in one Zen master's ashram: whenever he used to talk, and he used to talk about truth, he would raise

one of his fingers towards the sky. That was his particular gesture. Naturally, it became a joke. Anybody who wanted to imitate the master would raise the finger.

A young disciple, very young, became very artful in repeating and imitating the master's gestures--his face, the way he walked, the way he talked, the way he sat. Just a young boy he was. And anywhere and everywhere, when ever there was some serious discussion going on, he would raise his finger towards the sky in the same way as the master.

One day, the young boy was standing behind the master and the master was talking to people and he raised his finger, and from the back the boy also raised his finger. And the master called him...just took a knife and cut his finger! Now, you cannot think of this as compassion--just cut his finger. And the boy screamed out in pain, and the master said, "Don't miss the point! Now raise the finger." Now the finger is gone, there is nothing to raise, and the master says, "Now, raise the finger--don't miss the point! " And the boy, with tears in his eyes, raised his cut finger towards the sky...and that very moment the satori happened. The boy was transformed.

Now, on the surface it is very cruel, violent. If you can only see the surface you will be for ever against these Zen people. They don't look like saints. Saints are not known to do such things. Saints talk to the fish and saints talk to the trees, and birds come and sit on their shoulders. We have known such saints. But saints cutting the finger for no special reason? of such a simple young boy, who was, out of his innocence, imitating the master. Is the master angry? But if you look deep down, the boy was transformed.

If you see the transformation, then it was worth it--even if the master had cut the head of the boy it would have been worth it. A finger is nothing. The boy was totally transformed.

About this same Zen master it is said that when he was

searching with his own master he had become very famous--famous because birds would come and sit on his shoulders and on his head. Once even, while he was meditating under a tree, a bird made a nest in his hair. He had become famous all over the country. People used to worship him like a Buddha.

He became very egoistic, naturally--such a great attainment. His own master came and was very angry. He said, "What is this bird doing in your hair? Drop all this nonsense!" He was hurt, but he understood. And since that day, birds stopped coming to him.

People would come to see, but no birds would come--and they were surprised. They asked the master, "What has happened to your disciple? First birds used to come, animals used to come and sit by his side, but now they no more come.

The master said, "Now he has disappeared, he is no more special. He has attained. Now birds don't take any note of him. Animals simply pass by. He is not there! First he used to be there. He was becoming a special person; he was attaining to a specific kind of ego. Now even that is dropped. He was becoming enlightened!--now even enlightenment is dropped. So birds no longer come to him. Why should they come when there is nobody? And why should animals come and sit there?--they can sit anywhere. It is all the same. There is nobody any more."

Now see the point! Zen has a totally different approach towards life. Now the master is happy that the disciple has completely disappeared--because one can even become attached to the idea of enlightenment. And you have to be alert about it.

Just a few months ago it happened: I told Somendra "You have had a small satori"--since then I have not seen him laughing. Since then he has become very serious. He has become enlightened! He has taken it to his heart. He

has become special. He cannot laugh, he cannot enjoy--he cannot be ordinary.

And now, if this idea gets too much into him it will become a crust around him. He has to drop it. He has to become unenlightened again. He has to forget that satori. And not that it was not there--it was there--but many satoris happen before the ultimate satori happens. And the ultimate satori is dropping of all satoris, of all samadhis. The ultimate enlightenment is when you forget the very idea of enlightenment. Then there is innocence. Then there is just simple nature.

I have played a joke upon Somendra and he got caught into it.

I am creating here a climate of work--many things are happening, many are going to happen. And you have to be ready. And the first readiness is: when I hit you, when I shock you--now Somendra will be shocked--when I shock you, use the shock to become a little more alert, a little more aware.

Zen is a device, not an analysis of life.

And always remember, the universe is unknowable, absolutely, because it is alive. Analysis kills. And remember also: only dead things can be known. Life remains unknown and unknowable.

The moment you know, you have killed something. And people go on killing. They kill love--once they analyze it, it is killed. People are so violent that even in love their violence is dearly there, loudly there.

Sending flowers is a form of life sacrifice to show high esteem. When you send a beautiful rose flower to your girlfriend or boyfriend, what are you saying? This is not understanding. What are you saying when you say something with a flower? You give a rose flower to your girl--what are you saying ? You are saying: "I will kill for ya, baby!--I am ready to kill, I can murder. Look, I have

murdered this rose."

Even your love is nothing but a power trip. Power always kills. Bacon has said knowledge is power--must be so, because knowledge also kills. When you can kill something, you feel great power.

I have heard that the most favorite pastime of people around Stalin was hunting. When Brezhnev took Kissinger on a hunting trip, he showed his power. It is said that whenever Tito wants to know that he is still in control, he kills stag and bear.

Whenever people want to show that they are powerful, they kill. Adolf Hitler had to kill to show his power. And killing goes on on many levels. Knowledge is also a subtle way of killing a thing.

Zen people are not interested in knowledge because they are not interested in power. They are interested in life as it is. They are interested in the breakfast, not in God--not in heaven, not in the soul, not in past lives, not in future lives. Simply the breakfast. They are utterly for the immediate.

We know only that which we have killed. So never be a seeker for knowledge, otherwise you will become a killer, you will be a murderer. That's what science goes on doing. In all the scientific laboratories it is nothing but murder and murder--they have murdered nature, they go on murdering. t is a beautiful device to hide violence.

Just go and see in a scientific lab how many ways they have devised to torture simple, innocent animals--in the name of experiment! in the name of inquiry, in the name of truth. Unimaginable torture. But when it is for truth's sake, it is allowed--nobody thinks of the scientist as violent.

Nobody thinks of the philosopher as violent, but he is also violent. He goes on analyzing everything.

Zen is not interested in killing--not even in killing a single word. It is not interested in knowing: it is interested in being. And these sutras will help you to see the point.

My abiding place
Has no pillars;
It is roofless--
Yet the rain does not
Wet it, Nor the wind strike it.

Go into each word with deep love, with deep sympathy.
First:

My abiding place
Has no pillars...

The inner has no boundaries, no supports, no pillars. It is infinite space, it is pure space. It is nothingness. And there is nobody there. It is utterly silent. Not a single sound has ever penetrated there. Nobody has ever walked on that beach of your inner being, no footprints are there. It is virgin land.

If you look into that inner space, you will start disappearing. The more you look inside, the more you will disappear. That's why people don't want to look inside. They talk about self-knowledge, they talk about how to look inside; they talk about techniques--but they don't look. And there is no technique.

It is a very simple phenomenon to look inside. It is as simple as looking outside. You can simply close your eyes and look inside. But fear arises, great fear arises in looking inside--because that emptiness overwhelms you. You start disappearing; you start feeling as if you are going to die. You rush back. You start thinking a thousand and one things.

Have you not observed? Whenever you sit silently and look inside, the mind creates so many thoughts immediately. Why? It is your device. It is just like the octopus: whenever he sees that some enemy is coming around, the octopus releases dark black ink like a cloud

around himself. Immediately the ink cloud surrounds him and the enemy cannot see where he is.

When you go inside, immediately your mind starts secreting a thousand and one thoughts; immediately there is a great rush of energy into thinking. This is just like the octopus releasing dark black ink around himself--to create a cloud so you cannot see the innermost nothingness. You don't want to see. To see in is to commit suicide--to commit suicide as an ego, as a self.

Ikkyu says:

My abiding place
Has no pillars;
It is roofless...

It is just the vast open sky...no pillars, no roof. It is infinity.

Yet the rain does not wet it,

Nor the wind strike it.

How can the rain wet it if there is no roof and no pillar? and no ground either? Do you think when it rains the sky is wet? The sky remains as it is. Rains can't wet it. Do you think when it is cloudy those clouds leave any impact on the sky? Do you think the sky becomes contaminated, polluted by the clouds? Do you think it becomes darkened? Do you think any mark is left on the sky? Nothing is left.

How can you touch pure nothingness? And just as there is an outer sky, there is an inner sky. And 'outer' and 'inner are just arbitrary words. The day you will know, it is all one sky--outer and inner, it is all one. One has to be very courageous to go into it. Once you have the courage to see your reality, all fear disappears--because all fear is for the ego, all fear is because of the ego. "Am I going to survive or not?" is what fear is all about. But once you have seen the inner sky, the fear can't remain. You are not, so what? You

have never been and you will never be, neither born nor dying. And that which is has been always there and will be always there. But you are not that!

It appears only when you are not, when you have disappeared. You are just a dream. The dreamer is also part of the dream, and when the dream disappears, the dreamer also disappears. Living in this inner space, you are not afraid about security. Then insecurity is security.

That's what Alan Watts means when he says 'the wisdom of insecurity.' There is only one way to be really secure and that is: don't have any roof, don't have any pillars. Just move into the open sky. And then if it rains, let it rain--you will not get wet. You will be the sky, how can you get wet? Then if death comes, let it come--you will not be dying, because how can you die? You were never born. You don't exist as a thing, as an entity.

Living in insecurity, one is secure. Trying to be secure, one remains insecure. This is the law of reverse effect. If you want something you will miss it--just because you want it. The more you want, the more difficulties you create. And then there is a vicious circle. You want to be secure, you don't want to die. If you don't want to die, you will have to die a thousand and one deaths; you will have to die every day. If you don't want to die, then everything will become a death message; then you will be continuously trembling; and afraid. From everywhere you will see death coming.

And if you forget all about death, and you accept death, then even in death you will not die, even in death you will be a watcher. Death will come and go. You will see it coming, you will see it passing, and you will remain, you will abide. That which abides in you for ever and ever is not an entity--it is a consciousness. It is not a soul, it is awareness, it is pure awareness. And that awareness is part of the universal awareness.

My abiding place

Has no pillars;
It is roofless--
Yet the rain does not wet it,
Nor the wind strike it.

One Zen master was moving with his disciples. They came across a small river--they had to cross it. It was not very deep, a shallow river. They started passing through it. The master had always said to his disciples, "When an enlightened person passes through the river, his feet never become wet." They were all waiting for an opportunity to see. They were puzzled because his feet were becoming wet. They became very much confused: "Is our master not yet enlightened?"

And just standing in the middle of the river, the master started laughing an uproarious laugh, a belly-laugh, and they asked, "What is the matter?"

He said, "You fools! I had said that the enlightened person's feet never become wet, and my feet are not becoming wet--and the feet that are becoming wet are not my feet. You need not be confused; you need not look so puzzled and perplexed. This water is not touching me! Nothing can touch me because I am not. This water of the river is not touching the sky, it is not making the sky wet--how can it make me Wet? I am part of the sky."

Yet the rain does not wet it,
Nor the wind strike it.

So when you are Communing with a master, remember it--you are communing with somebody who is a nobody; you are communing with something which is not an entity but only a presence. Communing with a master is not communing with a person but with a presence. A person will become wet, but the presence cannot become wet. The

presence remains uncontaminated.

That presence is you. One has just to find it out--that's all. But you have become so much entangled with the ideas about yourself--that you are a Hindu, a Mohammedan, a Christian, a man, a woman, white, black, this and that--you have become so much entangled with identities that you never look inside to see that you are just a pure sky and nothing else. No Hindu exists there, no Mohammedan, no man, no woman, no black, no white. These are all identities.

Think of the one who is identified with these things, think of the inner sky. These are all clouds--Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian, communist, capitalist--these are all clouds. Don't get too much obsessed with the clouds. Go on remembering the sky.

When it blows,
The mountain wind is boisterous,
But when it blows not,
It simply blows not.

Once seen, this inner nothingness, a person becomes a suchness. This word 'suchness' is of infinite value in Buddha's experience, on Buddha's path--tathata or suchness. When there is nobody, then what happens? A few things happen....

First, if there is nobody, there is nobody to control your life, there is nobody to manipulate, there is nobody to discipline. All control, all discipline, all manipulation disappears. That's what freedom is--that's what moksha is. Not something far away in the skies, but something deep inside you right now.

When you are not there, how can you control your life? All control disappears--and with control disappear all kinds of tensions, with control disappears all uptightness, with control disappear all anxieties. You become an open flow,

so open that

When it blows,
The mountain wind is boisterous,
But when it blows not,
It simply blows not.

Then whatsoever happens happens. A man of Zen is totally different from the man of Yoga, and the distinction has to be understood.

The man of Yoga is in tremendous control. The whole methodology of Yoga is how to control yourself, how to control absolutely. The man of Yoga cannot be disturbed because he is in such utter control. The man of Zen cannot be disturbed because there is no control. But the difference is great.

The man of Yoga is not absolutely in control, nobody can be. There are possibilities when he will lose his control. You just have to bring about those possibilities--he will lose control, because all control is relative, it is only up to a certain extent.

Watch your control: if there is a ten rupee note you may not steal it, but ten thousand rupees? Then you feel a little inclined. And ten lakh rupees? Then you start thinking, then the idea seems to be worth thinking about. You start dreaming...ten lakh rupees? And just for once, and people are doing so many sins, you will be doing one and only one. And then you can donate half of the money to the church or to the temple. And it is not so wrong either, because it doesn't belong to a beggar--it belongs to some very rich person, and it doesn't matter to him whether he has ten lakh less or more. And in the first place he has exploited people for all this money. Now you are gathering energy to do it! But if it is ten crore rupees? Then you will not think a second time: you will simply grab it and rush.

There is a certain limit to all control; beyond that you will

fall. Nobody- call be in absolute control, because control is an unnatural thing and nothing unnatural can ever be absolute. Only nature can be absolute. Unnature has to be maintained; it takes energy, conflict, struggle, And when you are controlling yourself, there is somebody inside you who is against it--otherwise what is the point of controlling?

Control always splits you: the one who controls and the one who is being controlled, the top-dog and the bottom dog. And the bottom-dog waits for its own opportunities. There is constant barking and they go on fighting inside you. And you know it! There are moments when you can control your anger, and there are moments when you cannot. There are moments when you can control anything, and there are moments you cannot control. Sometimes the top dog is powerful and sometimes the bottom-dog is powerful.

And the conflict continues and the victory is never absolute. Nobody ever wins it because the other remains there, maybe tired, resting, waiting for its time. And whenever one is in control, the other is gaining power by resting. And the one who is in control is losing power by controlling? because controlling means energy is being lost, dissipated. Sooner or later, the controller becomes weak and the controlled becomes powerful. And this goes on, this is a wheel.

The man of Yoga seems to be in great control, but cannot be in absolute control. He has repressed. All that he has repressed is waiting there underneath him like a volcano--it will erupt. And when it erupts, he will be thrown in fragments.

The man of Zen cannot be disturbed--but the reason is totally different. Not that he is in absolute control: he cannot be disturbed because he is not.

And then one thing more has to be understood: because he is not, there is no division. He is just a natural man. But you carry the idea of control from the man of Yoga, and that's why the natural man has always been misunderstood.

For example:

A master died and his disciple started crying, great tears started coming, sobbing. The disciple was known himself as an enlightened person. Others said, "This is not right--you should not cry, you should not weep. What will people think? Is it right for a man who is enlightened to cry? '

And that disciple said. "There is no question of right and wrong--if tears are coming, they are coming. There is nobody to prevent them."

This is a totally different vision--this is the natural man.

And they said, "But you have been telling us that only the body dies, then why are you crying and weeping for the master's dead body? Only the body has died and the body was just material. It was going to die--dust unto dust."

And he said, "What are you talking about? I am not crying for the soul--the soul never dies, okay, so I am not crying for the soul! I am crying for the body, because it was beautiful, so beautiful. I will never be able to see such a beautiful man walk again. I will never hear his voice."

And they said, "But you should not be attached!"

But he said, "I am not attached! Just a flower has withered away and tears are coming to my eyes--I am not attached. These tears are not out of attachment."

This is very difficult to understand, because we know only tears which come out of attachment. We have not know natural tears--we have forgotten all that is natural. We know tears of attachment; we don't know tears of innocence.

A Zen man is a natural man.

When it blows,
The mountain wind is boisterous...

This is the description of a Zen man.

But when it blows not,

It simply blows not.

When he laughs, he laughs. When he cries, he cries. It is a simple phenomenon. Just as birds sing, the Zen master speaks; just as flowers bloom, he lives. But his life has no ulterior motive, no goal. His words are not teachings but assertions of joy--hallelujah! his celebration of being. And that, too, when it happens it happens. When it doesn't happen, it doesn't happen.

There have been Zen masters who talked their whole lives, and there have been Zen masters who never talked. Sometimes it happens that the song is sung in words, and sometimes it happens that the song is sung in silence. But there is nobody to do something. Whatsoever is happening is happening.

This is what is called freedom by Buddha: nobody to control and manipulate, all control disappears--freedom is born. Freedom from the self, the true freedom, Freedom for the self is the pseudo freedom. Yoga tries freedom for the self, and Zen is nothing but freedom from the self? Then one becomes like a tree, like an animal, like a child.

The sage is like a child, not like a yogi, not like a mahatma. The mahatma is trying to control himself continuously, day in, day out--curbing, dropping this, creating that. His whole life is his own effort. And, naturally, the so-called mahatmas look very tired, sad, desperate. Their life has not the quality of joy. They talk about satchitanand, but their life has not the quality of joy.

Zen people have the quality of joy. They don't talk about satchitanand--they are satchitanand. They are truth, they are bliss, they are consciousness.

Once Ma Tzu was asked, "Why did Buddha never talk about God?"

Ma Tzu said, "He was so busy living him, that's why. He didn't talk about God because he was too busy living him."

This state is a simple state, a natural state. You cannot brag about it. No child brags about his childhood, no sage can brag about his sagehood--it is the second childhood. He is reborn, the circle is complete. He has seen the world, he has seen the ways of the world, he has seen all the miseries of it, he has become wise. Now desires no longer drag him away from reality. He simply lives. Feeling hungry, he eats; feeling sleepy, he sleeps. He goes on doing the small things of life, but he becomes absolutely a nobody.

Though it has no bridge,
The cloud climbs up to heaven;
It does not ask aid
Of Gautama's sutras.

And when you become natural, spontaneous, simple, you start rising--of your own accord. You need not ask Gautama Buddha for his help. No help is needed.

Though it has no bridge,
The cloud climbs up to heaven;
It does not ask aid
Of Gautama's sutras.

There is no need to have any guide. If you are simple, then simplicity is enough. If you are natural, then that naturalness is enough. If you are not natural, you will need the help of a master. And the master is not going to give you anything--he will simply take all that is plastic in you, all that is inauthentic in you.

The master, the real master, simply throws you back to your own utter naturalness. He does not make you an achiever. He does not give you great dreams that you have to become this and you have to become that. He simply says: You relax. You be in a let-go. You be--don't become.

This is own of the basic messages of Buddha: Be a light unto yourself. If you are not, then you need the help of a master, just for the time being. But what is his help? He throws you back to yourself; he goes on throwing you back to yourself. You would like to cling to the master and he goes on throwing you back.

The real master does not allow you to cling to him. He helps you to uncling, because unclinging is maturity, clinging is childishness. And remember: to be a child is one thing, to be childish is quite another. To be a child means to become a sage; to be childish means to remain clinging, immature.

Ripples appear
On the unaccumulated water
Of the undug well
As the formless, bodiless man
Draws water from it.

And this is the constant refrain of buddha, that all is dream. Nothing has ever happened, and nothing is ever going to happen. But the mind lives in hope and through hope; it goes on thinking that something is going to happen. Nothing has ever happened, nothing is ever going to happen . All is. Hence the master reminded the disciple about the breakfast.

All is. You have to be reminded constantly of it, because you go on rushing away from it. All going is dreaming--whether you are going for money or for God does not matter. Whether you think of the body or of the soul does not matter. Whether you want to become very rich, very famous, or enlightened, doesn't matter. All is dream. Becoming is dream.

Look into that which you are, and don't go on looking for that which you would like to be. Hope is the secret of the mind; the mind lives through hope, nourishes itself on

hope. Once you stop hoping, once you relax and you just let hopes disappear, suddenly you are awakened to the truth--the truth of your being, the truth of the whole existence.

Ripples appear
On the unaccumulated water
Of the undug well...

Such is your life. Have you not seen in your dreams again and again? A lake is there and ripples appear, and a boat, and you are travelling in the boat--and there is no lake and no ripples and no boat and no traveller either. And in the morning you find yourself just lying in your bed--there has been no lake, no water, no boat, nothing. But all had appeared.

Let me remind you of the famous dream of Chuang Tzu:

He dreamt one night that he had become a butterfly. Next morning, sitting amidst his followers, he started laughing madly. And one disciple asked, "What is the matter? We have never seen you laugh so madly."

He said, "There is such a trouble, and I don't think that I will ever be able to solve it. I have fallen into a great riddle."

They said, "Just tell us--maybe we can be of some help."

And Chuang Tzu said, "Last night I dreamt that I had become a butterfly."

So they said, "But that is not a great riddle. We all dream, and we know it is a dream."

Chuang Tzu said, "That is not the point. Now the problem arises: it may be that now the butterfly has fallen asleep and is dreaming that she has become Chuang Tzu.

"Now who is right? Whether Chuang Tzu was right dreaming that he is a butterfly, or the butterfly is right dreaming that she is Chuang Tzu?

"And who am I? Am I just a dream in the mind of a butterfly? Because if Chuang Tzu can become a butterfly in

the dream, then why cannot a butterfly become Chuang Tzu in dream?"

Just think of butterflies sitting under the shade of a tree taking a good sleep in the afternoon, and dreaming that they are sannyasins...in orange, meditating, doing vipassana, thinking of great things. And you will also be puzzled--perhaps Chuang Tzu was right.

Who is true? Butterfly dreaming of Chuang Tzu? Chuang Tzu dreaming of butterfly?

Buddha's answer is that neither is true--only the one who has become aware of the problem, he is true. And he is neither; he is neither Chuang Tzu nor butterfly. The one, the mirror in which these dreams are reflected, the screen on which these dramas are played...that witnessing.

The mind:
Since there is really
No such thing as mind,
With what enlightenment
Shall it be enlightened?

And now comes one of the most significant sutras, and only those who have followed the sutras up to now will be able to understand it. Now Ikkyu hits hard. He says:

The mind:
Since there is really
No such thing as mind...

because mind means nothing but all the processes of dreaming. You call a mind a materialist mind because he dreams of money; and you call a mind a spiritualist mind because he dreams of satoris--but mind is dreaming, mind lives in dreams. It thinks of the faraway, of the distant. It lives in imagination and in memory; both are part of imagination. It

never comes to reality; reality is too much for it. Facing, encountering reality it melts and disappears just like dewdrops disappear in the morning sun. Whenever the mind comes to herenow, to the breakfast, suddenly it evaporates.

Try it: taking y our breakfast, just take the breakfast and don't think of God and the Devil and money and the woman and the man, and love and a thousand other things--don't think. Just take the breakfast, just be there, totally there--in it. Don't go here and there. Utterly present. And where is the mind? You will not find the mind.

Mind has never been found. Those who have looked, they have always found there is no mind.

The mind:
Since there is really
No such thing as mind,
With what enlightenment
Shall it be enlightened?

And then the question arises: If there is no mind, then why this talk about enlightenment? If there is no mind, there--there is nothing to become enlightened, nobody to become enlightened. If there is no mind, no illusion, then how to get out of the illusion? If there is no mind, then how to become something which is beyond mind? If mind exists not, then what is the point of saying that one has to attain to no-mind?

Mind in itself is not...one cannot talk about enlightenment any more. But in fact, this is enlightenment. Enlightenment is not getting out of the mind: enlightenment is seeing that the mind exists not--then you are suddenly enlightened. Then you are a Buddha.

There is the well-known incident about the Confucian scholar seeking enlightenment from a Zen master. The student constantly complained that the master's account was somehow incomplete, that the master was withholding

some vital clue. The master assured him that he was withholding nothing from him. The student insisted that there was something the master was withholding from him. The master insisted that he was not withholding anything from him.

Later on, the two went for a walk along the mountain path. Suddenly the master said, "Do you smell the mountain laurels? '

The student said, "Yes!"

The master said, "See! I am not withholding anything from you."

A strange story, but of tremendous import. What is the master saying? The smell of the laurels.... He says to the disciple, "Do you smell the mountain laurels?" They always bring you to the immediate: to the breakfast: to the mountain laurels. They don't bother about philosophical things.

And the disciple smells and he says, "Yes!"

And the master says, "See! I am not withholding anything from you. Just as you can smell the mountain laurels, so you can smell Buddhahood right now, this very moment. It is in the mountain laurels. It is on this mountain path. It is in the birds, it is in the sun. It is in me, it is in you. What keys and clues are you talking about? What secrets are you talking about?"

Zen has no secrets it is said. Zen is all openness. Zen is not a fist: it is an open hand. It has no esoteric ideology. It is down-to-earth, very earthly, very simple. If you miss, that simply shows that you have a very complex mind. If you miss, that simply means that you have been looking for complex ideologies, and Zen simply drags you back to reality, to the breakfast, to the mountain laurels. To this bird calling. This is Buddha calling! To this utter silence--this is Buddha present. This communion between me and you. This moment when I am not and you are not. All is open, all is available.

Someone asked a Zen master, "What is the ultimate nature of reality?

The master replied, "Ask the post over there!"

The man responded, "Master, I don't understand!"

The master said, "Neither do I."

It is not a question of understanding. Either you see it or you don't see it. Either it is there, felt, seen, recognized, or you have missed. It is so simple. There is no complexity in it.

The master says, "Ask the post over there!"

It is very natural that the disciple said, "Master, I don t understand--how is the post going to answer me?" because he had asked one of the greatest questions: What is the ultimate nature of reality? And so he said, "Master, I don't understand."

And the master said, "Neither do I."

There is nothing to understand and nobody to understand. All simply is! Understanding creates problems. You think you don't understand so you have to understand--then understanding creates new problems, and then you solve them and your solutions again create more new problems...and it goes on and on. One answer creates tell questions, and it is an infinite regress.

Nothing has to be understood! Life has to be lived, not understood. You are Buddhas, and so are the posts.

Another time it happened--the same master inquired of a disciple, "You have come very late. Where have you been the whole day?"

He said, "There was a polo match. A great match was going on and I became interested. I was watching."

The master asked, "The players were tired?"

And he said, "Yes, by the end they were very tired."

"And the horses were tired?"

And the disciple said, "Yes, the horses were also tired."

And the master said, "And the posts? The posts were tired?"

And the disciple was puzzled--how can posts be tired.

He said, "Sir, give me a little time to think." And he meditated over it the whole night, and only by the morning, as the sun was rising did he get the point.

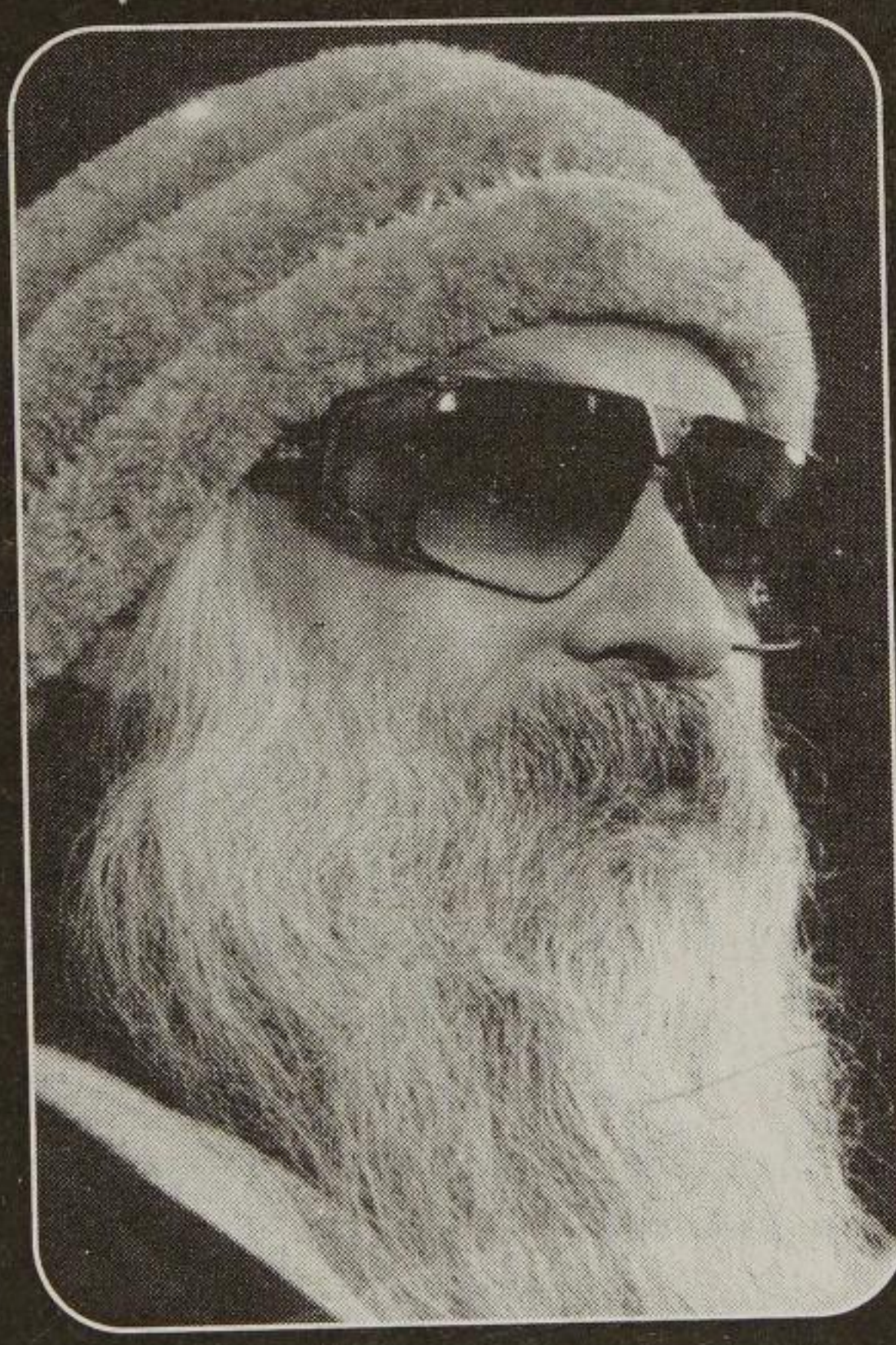
He rushed to the master's room and he said, "Yes, master--they were tired."

And the master said, "So you have seen the point."

All is one, so if the players were tired, the horses were tired, the posts must have become tired. All is one. Nothing is separate. We are not island. So the stones and the stars, all are joined together.

And everything is joined in this moment, is participating in this moment. If you become just this moment, all is attained. There is no other enlightenment.

Zen is a way back home--and the simplest way and the most natural way.



3

Only Man is Capable of Boredom

What exactly is boredom?

Though the society at present rejects you, maybe it will accept you by and by.

What about one of your followers who is mad after wine and women?

Why am I finding it so hard to receive this life, love, joy from you?

Blah, blah, blah, blah, please comment.

Why do you condemn belief?

The first question

What exactly is boredom? If I don't do something, even something needless, a panic arises, a huge fear. What is it that causes this frenzy of movement? Why am I so uncomfortable with this feeling?

The frustration of boredom increases when I think that what I would do is equally a meaningless frenzy. I feel caught.

Abha, boredom is one of the most important things in human life. Only man is capable of boredom; no other animal is capable of being bored. Boredom exists only when mind starts coming closer and closer to enlightenment. Boredom is just the polar opposite of enlightenment. Animals cannot become enlightened, hence they cannot become bored either.

Boredom simply shows that you are becoming aware of the futility of life, its constant repetitive wheel. You have done all those things before--nothing happens. You have been into all those trips before--nothing comes out of it. Boredom is the first indication that a great understanding is arising in you about the futility, meaninglessness, of life and its ways.

Now, you can respond to boredom in two ways. one is

what is ordinarily done: escape from it, avoid it, don't look eye to eye into it, don't encounter it. Keep it at your back; and run away; run into things which can occupy you, which can become obsessions; which take you so far away from the realities of life that you never see boredom arising again .

That's why people have invented alcohol, drugs. They are ways to escape from boredom. But you cannot really escape; you can only avoid for a while. Again and again the boredom will be coming, and again and again it will be more and more loud. You can escape in sex, in eating too much, in music--in a thousand and one kinds of things you can escape. But again and again the boredom will arise. It is not something that can be avoided; it is part of human growth. It has to be faced.

The other, response is to face it, to meditate on it, to be with it, to be it. That's what Buddha was doing under the Bodhi Tree--that's what all Zen people have been doing down the ages.

What exactly is meditation? Facing boredom is meditation. What does a meditator go on doing? Sitting silently, looking at his own navel, or watching his breathing, do you think he is being entertained by these things? He is utterly bored! That's why the Zen master moves with a stick in his hand--because those bored people are bound to fall asleep. There is no other escape, so only one escape is left: at Least they can fall asleep. They cannot escape. They have themselves, of their own accord, become part of the Zen training and the discipline--they cannot escape. But one escape is always available: you can fall asleep, then you forget all about it. That's why in meditation one feels sleepy.

The whole effort in meditation is this: be bored but don't escape from it; and keep alert, because if you fall asleep you have escaped. Keep alert! Watch it, witness it. If it is there, then it is there. It has to be looked into, to the very core of it.

If you go on looking into boredom without escaping the

explosion comes. One day, suddenly, looking deep into boredom, you penetrate your own nothingness. Boredom is just the cover, the container in which is contained your inner nothingness--shunyata. If you escape from boredom, you are escaping from your own nothingness. If you don't escape from boredom, if you start living with it, if you start accepting it, welcoming it.... That's what meditation is all about: welcoming boredom, going into it on one's own; not waiting for it to come but searching for it.

Sitting for hours in a yoga posture, just watching your breathing, one gets utterly bored. And the whole training of meditation is such that it helps boredom. In a Zen monastery you have to get up every day at the same time in the morning--every day, year in, year out. It doesn't matter whether it is summer or winter. You have to get up early, three o'clock, you have to take the bath, you have to drink the same tea, and you have to sit.... The same gestures followed again and again. And the whole day is also a very very fixed routine: you will eat your breakfast at a certain time, then you will meditate again, then you will have your food at a certain time--and the same food!

Everything helps boredom.

And the same clothes, and the same monastery, and the same master every day with his stick walking around. And every day in the evening you have to go for a session with the master. And the questions that are given are such boring questions to meditate on: What is the sound of one hand clapping? Just think of it--it will drive you mad! What is the sound of one hand clapping? There is no answer to it, you know it; everybody knows there is no answer to it. And the master goes on insisting, "Go on repeating, go on meditating on it."

It is all well managed. The boredom has to be created--immensely, tremendously. The boredom has to be allowed as totally as possible, has to be helped, supported from every side. The same evening, the same work, the same

chanting of the mantra. The same time you have to go to sleep again...and this goes on, this wheel. Within a few days you are utterly bored and you cannot escape. There is no way to escape. You can't go to the movie, you can't look at the TV; you can't have anything that can help you to avoid it. You are thrown into it again and again.

Great courage is needed to face it. It is almost like death; in fact, far more hard than death, because death comes when you become unconscious. And you are stirring all sorts of boredoms. What happens? There is the secret of all meditations: if you go on watching, watching, watching, boredom becomes bigger and bigger, intenser and intenser, and then the peak...nothing can go on for ever. There is a point from where the wheel turns. If you can go to the very extreme, to the very peak, then the change, transformation, enlightenment, satori, or whatever you want to call it, happens. Then one day, suddenly, the boredom becomes too much. You are suffocated, you are almost being killed by it. You are surrounded by an ocean of boredom. You are overflooded by it and there seems to be no way to escape. The very intensity and totality of it, and the wheel turns. Suddenly boredom disappears and there is satori, samadhi. You have entered your nothingness.

Now there will be no boredom any more. You have seen the very nothingness of life. You have disappeared--who can be bored? with what? You exist no more. You are annihilated.

You ask: What exactly is boredom?

A great spiritual phenomenon. That's why buffaloes are not bored; they look perfectly happy and enjoying. Only man is bored. And in man, also, only the people who are very talented, intelligent, they are bored. The stupid people are not bored. They are perfectly happy doing their jobs,

earning money, making a bigger bank balance, raising their children, reproducing, eating, sitting in the movie, going to the hotel, participating in this and that. They are enjoying! They are not bored. They are the lowest types; they really belong to the world of buffaloes. They are not yet human.

A man becomes human when he starts feeling bored. You can see it: the most intelligent child will be the most bored child--because nothing can keep his interest for long. Sooner or later he stumbles upon the fact and asks, "Now what? What next? This is finished. I have seen this toy, I have looked into it, I have opened it, I have analyzed it, now I am finished--what is next?" Soon he starts finishing things. By the time he becomes young, he is already bored.

Buddha was utterly bored. He left his kingdom when he was only twenty-nine, at the peak of his youth. He was utterly bored--with women, with wine, with wealth, with kingdom, with everything. He had seen all, he had seen through and through. He was bored. He renounced the world not because the world is wrong, remember. Traditionally it is said he renounced the world because the world is bad--that is absolute nonsense. He renounced the world because he became so bored with it.

It is not bad, neither is it good. If you are intelligent, it is boredom. If you are stupid, you can go on. Then it is a merry-go-round; then you move from one sensation to another. You are interested in trivia and you go on repeating and you are not conscious enough to see the repetition--that yesterday also you had been doing this, and today also you are doing, and again you are imagining tomorrow to do the same thing again. You must be really unintelligent. How can intelligence avoid boredom? It is impossible. Intelligence means seeing things as they are.

Buddha left the world out of boredom; utterly bored, he ran away from the world. And what was he doing them for six years sitting in those forests? He was getting more and

more bored. What can you do, sitting in a forest?--watching your breath, looking at your navel, day in, day out, year in, year out. He created that boredom to its ultimate peak, and one night it disappeared. It disappears of its own accord.

If you reach to the peak...the turn comes. It comes! And with that turn of the tide, light enters into your being--you disappear, only light remains. And with light comes delight You are full of joy--you are not, but full of joy--for no reason at all. Joy simply bubbles up in your being.

The ordinary person is joyous for a reason--he has fallen in love with a new woman or a new man and he is joyous. His joy is momentary. Tomorrow he will be fed up with this woman and he will start looking for another. The ordinary man is joyous because he has got a new car; tomorrow he will have to look for another car. It goes on and on...and he never sees the point of it, that always, finally, you are bored. Do whatsoever--finally you are bored..Every act brings boredom.

The intelligent person sees it. The sooner you see, the more intelligence you show. Then what is left? Then only boredom is left, and one has to meditate over it. There is no way to escape from it. Then go into it. See where it leads. And if you can keep going into it, it leads into enlightenment.

Only man is capable of boredom, and only man is capable of enlightenment.

The second question

It seems that though the society is at present rejecting you, by and by it will accept you.

Please comment.

Siddhartha, why are you worried about the society, its rejecting me or accepting me? Forget about the society! It has always accepted people like me only when they are gone; it always accepts Buddhas when they are dead. It

accepts only when Buddhas cannot do anything; it accepts only when Buddhas become just theories. The flame is gone; it is only a memory now. Then they accept--not only accept, they worship. That's what they have been doing all the time and they will be doing all the time in the future too.

Nothing has changed fundamentally. The unenlightened remain unenlightened.

Why do they reject? They reject out of fear. Just listen to me: just now I was saying something about boredom. Now the ordinary person can't accept it, that one has to go into boredom. He will be afraid. He will say, "What nonsense is this man talking about?" He will become afraid even to listen to it, because who knows?--the idea may get into his mind that life is boring. Then all his joys...and he was going along so happy and he was so delighted with small toys. All those toys will be broken! He does not want to do that; he is too much obsessed with his toys. He does not want to listen to such things. When I am gone, they can worship me--because I will not be shouting at him.

Worship is cheap. To be with a living master is hard, arduous; it needs guts. Worship is a polite gesture. Worship says, "You may be right, but we are not ready for it. You must be right; we are not even ready to argue about it, because--who knows?--if we argue about it, you may prove right. So we don't argue; we will worship you. You must be right! How can you be wrong? But we don't want to follow you yet. We will make a beautiful image of you in the temple. We will bring flowers to your feet, we will repeat your name, and we will go on doing the same stupid things we have been doing before. You will be just decor, a decoration. We will put a beautiful picture of you in the home; it makes the drawing-room look so pretty. But that's all. And once in a while we will even garland your picture, but that's all."

This is a polite way of avoiding, a very polite way of saying, "No, we can't come with you--at least, not yet.

Ultimately you may be right, but we are not worried about the ultimate. For the moment, forgive us, and let us live our joys. Life is so enchanting--who cares about enlightenment?"

And any person who comes here and throws a stone in your glass houses looks like an enemy. Any person who comes and disturbs your sleep and destroys your dreams looks like an enemy. So when a Buddha is alive he has to be rejected. If he is not rejected, then he is not a Buddha. When he is dead, he has to be worshipped. If he is not worshipped when he is dead, then he is not a Buddha.

That's how we have always been behaving with Buddhas, Krishnas, Christs--that has been our usual procedure. We have found a very very cunning, clever way. We don't want to say no, because then we have to enter into the argument with these people--and these people are argumentative. To face them is dangerous because they may convince you, their very being is convincing. One does not want to come dose to them. When they are dead, then it is perfectly okay. When Christ is alive, crucify him--and these are the same people who crucified him, now they go to the church. The same people! If he comes again, these same people will crucify him. People are people; they are not Jews and not Christians and not Hindus and not Mohammedans. They are just the same people.

There are only two possible categories: the enlightened and the unenlightened. The unenlightened are all the same, and the enlightened are all the same. Their tastes are not different.

It is not that Jews crucified Jesus--it is the mediocre mind, the mind that is afraid, afraid to face reality; the mind that is afraid to go into the utter boredom. And the utter boredom is a passage: it leads to the temple of celebration.

But, Siddhartha, don't be worried about people. Why should you be worried? Is there some doubt in your mind? Are you searching, seeking support from the people? It must be creating a certain restlessness in you: "How can

Bhagwan be right if so many people are against him?" You feel a little shaky, afraid, a little trembling arises in you. When you are here with my orange people, it feels good: "Bhagwan must be right--so many orange people.

When you go to M. G. Road, naturally you start thinking. "What am I doing here? All are not orange people. And it is not only that they are not orange, they are deadly against."

Fear arises in you, doubt arises in you: "Maybe I have fallen in the trap of a magician? of a hypnotist? An intelligent person like me, what am I doing here? Why did I get caught into these meditations? Nobody else is meditating! And I am coming from so far away, and the people who live in Poona don't care a bit." Something seems to be unsettled; you become shaky, you tremble. Now, deep in your mind you would like to be with me, but what to do with this crowd that is against me? Now you are creating consolations for yourself.

You ask: It seems that though the society is at present rejecting you, by and by it will accept you.

You are not really concerned with the society. You want to hear from me that "Yes, Siddhartha, don't be worried--these people are going to follow me," so you can feel good. "These people will accept me, wait! All these people are going to become orange--just wait, just time is needed." You want an assurance from me so the presence of those people who are against me does not disturb you.

Just look into these things. Become very alert to what happens in your mind when you ask a question, why you ask a question. The question may not show anything of the reality of you, but you cannot hide it--not from me. And I don't answer your questions so much as I answer the reason why the question has arisen in you. So sometimes it feels that I am not directly answering your question; sometimes you may even be surprised that I am going a little roundabout, not direct. Sometimes you may even think that I am avoiding

the question that has been asked--it is not so. My whole effort here is not to answer the question on the surface, but in the depth, from where it has arisen, why it has arisen.

There are people who ask questions, and then they make a note that "This is not really my question I am asking it for others." But why can't the others ask it? Why should you be worried about others? Now, this person wants to ask but does not want to show that the question is his.

One day a man came to me and he said, "One of my friends has suddenly become impotent. I have come for him. Is there some help?"

I told the man, "Why didn't you tell your friend?--he could have come himself and told me that one of his friends has become impotent, because I see perfectly well that you are your friend."

He became very much worried. He started perspiring. I said, "Don't perspire! But why? Why can't you face a thing? If you have become impotent, don't be so impotent that you cannot even ask the question. At least save that much potency. Face the problem."

There are a few people who go on thinking.... And it is not just that they are deceiving--they even think that they are asking to help others. Yoga Chinmaya often asks questions that "This is to help others." Deep down the question is his, but he cannot accept it, that "It is my question." That hurts: "I am asking such a question? I should not be asking such a question. I have lived with Bhagwan so long--I should not be asking such a question." But the question is there and it has to be asked, so one finds a clever way to ask it.

Now, Siddhartha is worried about the society, it seems, on the surface. Deep down, he is worried about himself. He wants an absolute promise that "Siddhartha, you are on the right track--others are wrong. Just wait! They will not only worship me, they are going to worship you too! You are

going to be my apostles; you are my Luke and Thomas and Mark. Wait, just wait! You have done such a great work by becoming a disciple to a madman. Just wait--these foolish people will not only worship your master, they are going to worship you too. Then they will recognize, then they will see what a great opportunity they have missed."

Just go deep into your own fear and let the fear be expressed clearly in your question. At least find the cause of your questions. If you can find the cause of your questions, out of a hundred, ninety-nine questions will simply disappear--because in the very cause you will find the answer. To go deeply into a question, to its very roots, is to find its answer. And the one question that will not find an answer from yourself...asking it will be of great import--that will become a bridge between me and you.

Always go into the unconscious roots of your question.

There is another question on similar line:

In your last lecture you called Yudhishthira, the Dharmaraj, an irreligious person simply because he lost his wife in gambling. But what about one of your own followers who is mad after wine and women? Not only this but he smokes charas and ganja freely. In what sense is he following a religion superior to that of Yudhishthira? Please explain.

The question is from sohan bharti. He is a new sannyasin; just a few days before he took sannyas. He must be having a very very strong Indian mind, deeply conditioned.

Now, staking a woman in gambling--and he says, "Simply because he lost his wife in gambling!" Wife in India is just a thing, furniture, so what is wrong in it? In fact, Yudhishthira and his brothers were behaving with the wife with that attitude that "she is property." There were five brothers and the five had divided the wife; the wife had five husbands. You can't divide a person like a property.

This is such a horrible thing to think about: a woman has been divided by five men--as if she is a piece of land!

And then, finally, he staked her as a bet in gambling and lost her. Can you think of any woman staking her husband in gambling? And would you say, "So what! Just a husband--why not?" But there is no such story in India. You would never have forgiven that; you could not have conceived.

The husband in India is called swami--master. And the wife is called dasi--servant, a slave. This is ugly. But Sohan Bharti's Indian mind must have been hurt when I said it, because this man, Yudhishthira, is thought to be a great religious man, one of the great religious leaders of the Hindus. To me he is not even human! What to say about his being religious? He is not even human--he is inhuman.

And he asks: But what about one of your own followers who is mad after wine and women?

Then he is perfectly human! Nothing inhuman about it! What is wrong in being mad after a woman? It is natural. Yes, one can go beyond it, but one goes beyond only when one has gone through.

And everybody is in search of some kind of wine, some kind of intoxicant, to drown one's miseries, one's anxieties.

Morarji Desai is trying to create prohibition in India. Now, he himself is intoxicated with power. That is a far more dangerous intoxication than ordinary wine--because when you drink alcohol you harm only yourself, nobody else; but when you drink the alcohol of power you harm millions.

If a person is smoking charas and ganja freely, he is simply harming himself. Yes, he is harming, but he is simply harming himself. That is his birthright, to harm himself. He is committing a slow suicide, but that is his birthright. He is not harming anybody. He is not trying to force his ganja on you or his charas on you.

Now, Morarji Desai is trying to force his idea on the whole country! That is bossy, that is irreligious. Who are

you to direct everybody's life? Nobody should be so arrogant. You can say what you feel, but it should not be imposed as a law. I also know that alcohol is not good, but you should go and teach people, tell people that alcohol is not good. Nobody should try to impose it by violence. To make it a law is violence: it means now the police will be behind it, bullets will be behind it.

What does it mean when you make a law? It means now you are not capable by converting people, persuading people; now you are trying to do things by force, by power, by violence. This is undemocratic, this is absolutely undemocratic.

And nobody sees the power trip--the alcoholic, the intoxicating state of power. Whenever somebody gets into power, he is drunk!

I am not saying that people should drink alcohol or use charas and ganja, but I am saying that that is everybody's birthright. One has to be allowed at least one thing: to do harm to oneself--if one wants to, if one decides that way. You make it dear that this is harmful, that's all. Nothing else can be done. You cannot be the deciding factor.

So, if you ask me, "What higher religion is your follower following?" I will still say that he is better than Yudhishthira--at least he is not staking his wife in gambling. He may be staking himself, he may be foolish, but I cannot say that he is harming anybody else. Yudhishthira had no respect for the woman. And if you don't have any respect, how can you have any love? Love and respect go together.

Don't pretend that you love your woman if you don't respect her. If you respect, only then do you love. If you don't respect, you only exploit her; your relationship is that of lust, not of love. Yudhishthira had to be exploiting this poor woman. Just think of the idea, of the horrible idea...like a thing. She was being used like a thing, and now she was being staked like a thing. And if...and that's what happened: Yudhishthira lost her. The others who had won

immediately tried to undress her then and there. And then Yudhishthira and all the four brothers were sitting silently there, looking at it: "Now you cannot do anything--now she is somebody else's property. Whatsoever they want to do, they can do." What kind of respect? What kind of love?

It is ugly. It is irreligious. It is inhuman.

And remember, I am not saying that my follower...and I don't know who this follower is. It may be just a figment of your imagination. If he is doing these things, he is not doing very well, but still if you compare him with Yudhishthira he is far better--he is just harming himself.

The other has to be respected as an end, is never to be used as a means. The woman is equal to man. But for the Indian mind it is very difficult to accept the equality of the woman. So many so-called saints of India have been condemning the woman, down the ages, in such words that it seems unbelievable that these people had any sense--of respect, of love, of sympathy, of compassion.

The Indian saints have been telling that the woman is the door to hell. The woman is not the door to hell; it depends on you. She can be a door to hell if you decide to go to hell, and she can be a door to heaven if you decide to go to heaven.

And don't forget that the same is true about you too. It is not only that men go to hell--then where do women go? And how will they go, because they will not find any door? Men must be function as a door for them too.

Nobody is a door to heaven or hell. You create your heaven and hell. But these so-called saints were so much afraid of woman--their fear shows in their condemnation.

I have heard a story that a rabbi used to go around Sodom, the famous condemned city, Sodom, and he would shout from every corner, on every street to people, "Stop your sins! Don't do this! Don't do that! Avoid sex, avoid this, avoid that..." for years.

One day, one of the disciples of the rabbi asked, "You

never become tired? Nobody listens to you, nobody has ever listened or paid any attention to you, but you go on shouting around the town continuously. People are tired of you, but you are not tired? From where do you get this energy? Do you still think, do you hope, that you will be able to convert these sinners?"

He said, "What are you talking about? I am not worried about them. If I go on shouting against them, at least I can save myself. If I don't shout, there is every possibility they will convert me. I will start doing the same things that they are doing--that is the fear. So I go on shouting! The more I shout, the more I become convinced. I am not worried about whether they are convinced or not. The more I shout, the more I convince myself that I am on the right track. And I can repress easily--those desires are in me too. And if I don't say anything against them, there is every possibility I may become just like these people."

Your so-called saints who have been talking against women are afraid. They know if they don't talk, if they don't go on condemning, they will be falling into some kind of relationship with women. They are afraid of their desires, they are afraid of their own sexuality. By condemning women they are simply creating an atmosphere around themselves, they are simply trying to repress their sexuality and nothing else.

But the Indian mind has become so much accustomed to this--that's why you can ask such a thing:

In your last lecture you called Yudhishthira, the Dharmaraj, an irreligious person simply because he lost his wife gambling.

Now, Sohan Bharti must not be behaving humanly with his own wife. How can he behave respectfully with his own wife if he has this idea? Look deep into your question . If you cannot respect women, you cannot respect anybody else--because it is from women you come. The woman mothered you for nine months, then she took every care,

she loved you for years. And then again...you can't live without a woman. She is your solace, your warmth. Life is very cold; the woman becomes your warmth. Life is very uninspiring; the woman becomes your inspiration. Life is very very arithmetical; the woman becomes your poetry. She gives grace to your life. She takes care of you. She loves you, she goes on loving you, tremendously, totally.

And you say:...simply because he lost his wife gambling?

He must have been a man without heart. Instead of a heart, there must have been a hard rock.

The third question

"I am life, love, joy. Here I give you life, love, joy." Bhagwan, when I heard you say this two mornings ago, my body trembled with awe and also a deathlike fear of getting lost in you or of missing out completely.

Why am I finding it so hard to receive this life, love, joy, from you?

Chintana, everybody finds it hard, because to receive joy, to receive light, love, goes against your ego. The ego wants to be the donor, not the receiver; the ego always wants to give, not to receive. It is easier to give love; it is very difficult to receive it. To be at the receiving end ego feels very much hurt.

It is always difficult, and it is going to be still more difficult if you are with a Buddha or a Christ or a Krishna--because you have nothing to give to them. You have all to take from them and nothing to give them in return. Your ego feels annihilated.

If you can give me something in return, it will not feel so bad, but what can you give? And whatsoever you can give will be just a token and nothing else, because whatsoever you have is nothing.

Just the other night a sanyasin gave me a sea-shell. I

loved the gesture. Must have found on some beach. It is nothing, but shows great love for me. Not only love--something else too. You receive so much from me, you would like to give something in return so it remains balanced. And all that you can give, all, I say, can't be more than sea-shells.

So, Chintana, that fear arises in everybody. You have to drop that fear, because when you are receiving from me, you are not really receiving anything from me--because I am not there. I am just a passage. If you are receiving anything from me, you are receiving from God, not from me. Forget all about me! You need not even say a thankyou.

Whenever a sannyasin comes to me and says, "Thank you, Bhagwan, for all that you have done to me" I feel a little uneasy, because what is he saying? There is nobody to receive this thankfulness.

Remember Jesus: he was passing through a crowd. A poor woman, an ill woman, rushed behind him and touched his garments. And she was healed--immediately, instantly, so deep was her trust. She had come from a great distance; she was in great agony and pain and suffering. But such was her trust that she believed that if she could even touch the garments of Jesus all would be cured--and all was cured.

Jesus looked back and the woman said, "How should I thank you, Lord? You have healed me! I had come ill and I am now healthy and ˘whole."

And Jesus said, "Your faith has healed you. And don't thank me, thank God."

Never be worried. Don't feel that you are becoming grateful towards me. I am just a vehicle, a passage, a window. And if the sun has penetrated through the window to you, feel thankful to the sun--forget about the frame of the window. I am just the frame and nothing else. You can receive from me as much as you want, as much as you can dare, as much as you need.

Remember always, you are receiving from God--because

from wherever we receive, we always receive from God. He is the only giver; there is no other.

You ask me: "I am life, love, joy. Here I give you life, love, joy." Bhagwan, when I heard you say this two mornings ago, my body trembled with awe and also a deathlike fear of getting lost in you or of missing out completely.

Why am I finding it so hard to receive this life, love, joy, from you?

Feel fortunate that you are standing on that verge from where, if you receive, you will be transformed. If you don't receive, you will suffer all your life. The memory will haunt you.

If you have come to me, and if you don't dissolve, the memory will haunt you. You will never be at ease with life again. You have tasted something of the beyond; now life will feel almost tasteless. Going back, hiding, back into your old caves of the mind, is dangerous. And the mind tends to do that. Beware of it.

Take the jump!--when I give you the call, take the jump.

And remember always that it is not from me as a person that you are taking anything,, because the person exists no more. It is only a presence. It looks like a person to you, because you cannot yet see the presence. Once you accept this love, this joy, this life, that is happening here, you will forget about me as a person, you will start feeling me as a presence. You will forget my boundaries--they are arbitrary--and you will start seeing the unbounded, which is true, which is truth.

The person is just a wave in the ocean. Presence is the ocean itself. Let me be just a door, an opening. And that's exactly what I am, and that's exactly what a master is supposed to be.

Put your ego aside, Chintana, and open up. Receive it! A disciple has to be feminine to receive God; a disciple has to be just a womb, become a womb. That's why it happens almost always that the women are the best disciples in the world.

Buddha had fifty thousand disciples--forty thousand are women. So was the case with Mahavir too. Why? Why does a woman easily become a disciple, very easily, naturally. She knows how to receive.

For man it is a little more difficult. For man it takes a little longer---because he has no physical womb so he does not know how to receive. He also has a spiritual womb, but that is unconscious. The woman has a spiritual womb and a physical womb too, so she is conscious of her being a womb. She receives, and gives birth to a child. She knows that she can receive with great joy, in exhilaration, in ecstasy. But man ordinarily is a donor, biologically a donor. His ego is hard. He never thinks in terms of receiving, in terms of surrendering and trusting.

That's why it is difficult for man to surrender. It takes a little longer.

And whenever a man surrenders to a master, then too you will see--in the man disciple also some feminine grace arising. Many women have reported to me again and again, "What is happening to your men disciples? They are turning feminine." That is true. Whenever somebody becomes a disciple, naturally a feminine grace arises. He becomes less aggressive; his aggression slows down. His ego is no more so prominent. And, slowly slowly, spiritually he comes to recognize his womb.

Only when you have recognized your womb can you connect with a master--that's what sannyas is all about. When I say to some new person, "You are ready for sannyas," and he hesitates, and he says, "But I have not thought about it...."

Just the other night it was happening. You must be remembering Mark--I had told him that I never miss a Mark. Last night he came to see me, and he tried, but I didn't miss him. He was so perfectly womblike, but he was not aware of his own womb. It is deep hidden into the

recesses of the unconscious. And the moment he surrendered, a great grace arose in him. His face changed, became luminous.

Chintana, the problem with you is: you are a woman but you had fallen in wrong company. She has been a Catholic nun--that is the difficulty. She has forgotten about her biological womb also. A nun has to forget; a nun has to forget her biological receptivity. A nun has to become a non-woman.

So Chintana has almost turned into a man--all nuns turn. She has lived in wrong company. Those people enforced a certain structure upon her being. She is a soft woman deep inside, but on the outer side the character of a nun, the armour of a nun, has made her hard. It is fortunate that she has come here. Slowly slowly that hardness is disappearing; her woman is arising, her womb is taking possession of her again. The nun is going away. But when you have practised a certain thing for years, it takes time, it lingers.

That Catholic nun, the shadow of that Catholic nun, is around Chintana yet. That's what is making her so hesitant about taking the ultimate jump. In fact, she must have had a great religious desire, otherwise why should she have become a nun? She must have been a seeker--for many lives--otherwise nobody goes and becomes a monk or a nun. It is out of people's search. And the search was such that she was not contented there; naturally, she moved to the opposite polarity.

My sannyasins are a totally opposite polarity from being a Catholic nun or monk. Now, here, she can relax. But the conditioning is there and it will go, slowly slowly. Don't co-operate with that conditioning. It is on the way, it is dying. Let it die.

And once the nun has disappeared from Chintana's consciousness, she will bloom into a beautiful flower. And the day is not far off....

The fourth question

Yesterday you said a major difference between Buddhism and Christianity, Hinduism, etc., was that in the former there were no a priori concepts, and in the latter a predetermined image of God conditioned one's experiencing of that God which in turn reinforces the initial image: a vicious circle. However, in the Buddhist way not-holding a priori images--holding non-images--obviously still conditions one to experience God as no-thing, void, which then in turn reinforces the initial non-image--still a vicious circle. Please comment.

Don't play with words. Look to the simple fact. Buddhism is not giving you an image of nothingness--there cannot be any image of nothingness. Can you imagine nothingness? Try. How will you imagine nothingness? What image? Nothingness simply means: no thing, no image. You cannot make an image of no image. One thing.

Buddhism is not saying create an image of nothingness In the first place, it cannot be created. If you create an image of nothingness, then certainly you are conditioned again; then God will look like nothingness. But Buddhism is not saying to create an image of nothingness. Buddhism is simply saying avoid all images. And if you can create the image of nothingness, that is included in 'all images'.

Avoid all images. Just keep your inner space clean and open, mirrorlike...and then see whatsoever is seen.

Simply, Buddhism is saying: Don't decide before knowing. That is the meaning of don't have an a priori image--don't decide before knowing. Let knowing happen, and let the decision come through knowing. Don't believe beforehand, because your belief will contaminate your knowing--and then you will never be able to know whether what you have known is really there, or is there because of your belief. Your belief can create it.

Man's mind has great potential to create imagination. That's why hypnosis works. Have you watched a hypnotist working? He can hypnotize a person, and he can just put a small pebble on the hand of the person and can say, "This is burning coal, red hot burning coal." And the man who is in deep hypnosis simply believes it, because deep hypnosis means your faculties to doubt have been put to sleep. He believes, and the belief creates reality. His hand will burn--from the cold pebble! He will shriek, he will scream in pain; he will throw the pebble. And not only that--a blister will come on his palm.

Now what has happened? Now, when this man is de-hypnotized, the blister will be there--enough proof that a burning coal had been put on his hand. And you know that there was no burning coal, nothing like that: just an ordinary cold pebble. But the belief has created the reality of it.

And vice versa also it happens: you can put a burning coal in the hand of a deeply hypnotized person, in deep trance, and you can say, "This is a cold pebble," and there will be no blister and the man will not scream and there will be no mark left. That's how people fire-walk.

Now, what Buddhism is saying is: Belief can create a certain kind of reality--which is not there. Buddhism is not saying believe in nothingness, because that will create, certainly. But how can one believe in nothingness? You can't create the image of nothingness.

Nothingness simply means no image! So don't play with words. Logically, it looks relevant, your question looks relevant, that Buddhism creates the belief, the image of nothingness, then God appears as nothingness--so it is the same vicious circle. It is not. Buddhism simply takes all the beliefs away. It does not create any belief. It leaves you in a state of no-belief.

Remember: it does not create disbelief either! It simply leaves you in a state of no-belief. No-belief is not disbelief. Buddhism is not atheist; Buddhism is not theist. Buddhism

does not say anything about God. Buddhism says: Be silent, utterly silent, utterly imageless, empty, your eyes completely clean of all dust.

Now you can say, "This cleanness will be the dust in the eyes"--then you are playing with words. If I say, "Let your eyes be clean, then you will be able to see better," you can say, "But cleanness will be there. How can I see better? Cleanness will be a disturbance just like any dust!"

Logically, linguistically, you are right. Existentially you are not right. Cleanliness does not mean any thing; cleanliness simply means there is no dust, all is clean. When I say, "Nothing is written on this paper," will you say, "Then nothing is written on this paper, so something is written. You say nothing is written on this paper--'nothing' at least is written on the paper"? Now you are creating an unnecessary puzzle for yourself.

When I say nothing is written on the paper, I am simply saying nothing is written on the paper--the paper is empty. But you can start a philosophical argument: "At least 'nothing' is written on the paper, so the paper is not empty because nothing is there."

Nothing is nothing, sir.

There is a beautiful story:

Alice reached the King. When she reached the King, the King asked, "I am waiting for a messenger. Did you meet somebody on the way coming towards me?"

Alice said, "Nobody, sir."

The King thought that she had met somebody who is known as 'Nobody'. Alice simply said, "Nobody, sir." She is saying, "I have not met anybody," but the King must have been a great linguist, a philosopher. He thought, "So she has met Nobody on the way."

After a few minutes he asked, "But it seems Nobody walks slower than you, otherwise he must have arrived by now."

Alice thought, "He is saying, 'Nobody walks slower than

you,' "that he was condemning her. So she said, "No, sir. Nobody walks faster than me!"

And the King said, "But then it puzzles me: if Nobody walks faster than you, then why has he not arrived yet?"

Out of desperation Alice said, "Sir, nobody is nobody!"

And the King said, "Of course, Nobody has to be Nobody--but why has he not arrived yet?"

And so on...so it goes.

Buddhism is not saying Nobody is there inside, not in the sense the King took it. Buddhism is saying there is simply nobody, it is empty.

And beliefs gather around. And then you start looking through the beliefs. Then those beliefs change the colour of reality. Then you start seeing things as they are not.

Drop all belief systems. And remember: Buddhism is not a belief system--you are not to replace it. It is not said to drop Christianity and replace it by Buddhism--then you have not done anything. Then you have chosen one disease for another. Then you moved from one prison into another, from one bondage into another.

That's why Ikkyu says Buddhism is not an 'ism'. It is not a religion in the ordinary sense of the term. It is not a church: it is an insight. It is not an organization: it is an understanding. It is not a philosophy: it is a realization.

Once you understand the point, this problem win not arise. But if you have a philosophical bent of mind, you can go on creating such unnecessary questions and solving them, and you can get too much messed up.

It happened:

Dashing young Edward was walking through the park one afternoon when he heard a female voice cry out, "Get down, you beast! If you put your filthy paws on me once more I'll never come on the grass again."

He rushed behind the hedge from whence the voice had come, hoping to rescue a fair maiden from a foul creep--but

instead discovered a little old lady talking to her pet dog.

Your ideas, your interpretations.... Drop all ideas, drop all interpretations.

Ikkyu is not saying to accept Buddha's interpretation instead. Listen to what he says: Shakamuni, this mischievous guy--how many people he has misled! Not that Buddha has misled anybody, but people have been misled, that is true--people like you! They start creating images of nothing, they start believing in nobodies, they start believing in nothingness, they create a belief around nothingness--then nothingness is lost. Then your nothingness is no more empty: it is full of nothingness. Then you miss the point.

When Ma Tzu attained to emptiness he went to his master, bowed down and said, "Sir, now I have attained emptiness." He had been waiting for this moment for years and years, to go one day and tell the master. Now the moment had come--he had attained. And the master slapped him.

He said, "What nonsense are you talking? Go out and empty your mind of this emptiness. Empty your mind of emptiness! Go out! How can you have emptiness inside you? because then emptiness becomes something."

And Ma Tzu understood, and that very moment the illumination happened. He bowed down, and he said, "Yes, I had started clinging to emptiness. I was cherishing it as something great. Again the ego was coming from the back door. Now it was claiming, 'I have attained emptiness.'"

One has to be empty of emptiness too. One has to be simply without any beliefs--then the reality is as it is, then you know its suchness.

The last question

I very strongly believe in God. Why do you condemn belief?

I am not condemning belief--I am simply explaining it to you, that belief is the barrier to God. Belief is not a bridge but a barrier. It is your belief that is hindering you from God. If belief is dropped, immediately you are in God, you are God.

And why is there any need to believe? You don't believe in the sun, or do you? You don't believe in the earth, or do you? You know the earth exists, so there is no point in believing. You only believe in things which you don't know. Belief is out of ignorance. Buddha does not believe in God because he knows God! You don't know God, that's why you believe in God. And if you go on believing, beware--you will never come to know.

Belief simply means you are hiding your ignorance. Rather than destroying it, you are hiding it, decorating it, making it a little comfortable, convenient, acceptable. You are worried that you don't know God, so you cling to a belief, and you make yourself feel that, yes, you know. Repeating your belief constantly, again and again, you start creating a kind of auto-hypnosis that "I know, I believe!"

Just look at your question: I very strongly believe in God. Just belief won't do? It has to be strong? and then very strong? What does it show? You can't hide. The truth shows itself: you are very much afraid of your ignorance. Deep down you know that "I don't know." You have to push that ignorance, you have to fight with it--so you have to believe strongly.

Just think: somebody comes to you and says, "I love you very strongly!" What in the world does he mean? Love is not enough? Has it to be very strong? If love is there, it is enough. If love is there, there is no need even to say it. Silence is its expression.

But when somebody says, "I love you very strongly, very very strongly," then there is one thing certain, that he is afraid that his love is not there. He is managing it somehow, creating it somehow. And great effort he is taking to create

it--that's why he calls it strong, because he knows his unloving nature is difficult to repress. He has to fight with his unloving nature.

Your very word, "Very strongly I believe in God," shows that you don't know God at all; otherwise, there will be no need for strength. There will be no need for belief! God simply is. How can you believe or disbelieve? It is not left to you. But we go on hiding.

Just listen to this story:

Farmer Jim was very worried about the poor performance of his prize bull for which he had paid an astronomical sum. He talked to all his friends every time he went to the market, and one day learnt from a cousin that there was an amazing vet way down in the West Country.

He was so depressed about the bull that he decided this last resort was the answer, and he took himself off to Cornwall to find the vet. At last he found the chap who urged him to give his bull a great big pill once a day.

A few months later he met his cousin who asked him how he had got on. "Oh, it was marvellous," he said. "He gave me these pills for the bull and I had no sooner started him off on them than he hit the jackpot. In fact," he said, "I'm making a fortune out of the local farmers--they can't get their cows round here fast enough!"

"What are these pills then?" asked his cousin.

"Oh!" said Farmer Jim, "huge great green jobs like bombs--with a peppermint taste!"

Do you see the point? Do you get it? You cannot hide it--that peppermint taste will say everything. Very strong belief? That is the peppermint taste.

You don't know anything about God. That's why you are worried about why I am condemning belief. Your belief must be feeling shaken. And if the belief is gone, you will again be ignorant--that is the fear. But that is my work here. Excuse me, but that is my work here--to make you

absolutely as you are. If you are ignorant, you are ignorant. It is better to be that which you are, because only from that authentic reality can you be bridged to ultimate reality. With your false beliefs...and all beliefs are false. Belief as such is false. Knowing is true: believing is false.

I am here to make you ignorant again. If you co-operate with me this will happen: you will become ignorant, innocent. Your knowledgeability will disappear--and in that very disappearance you will find for the first time the mystery of life dancing around you, and the benediction of that mystery. That mystery is God.

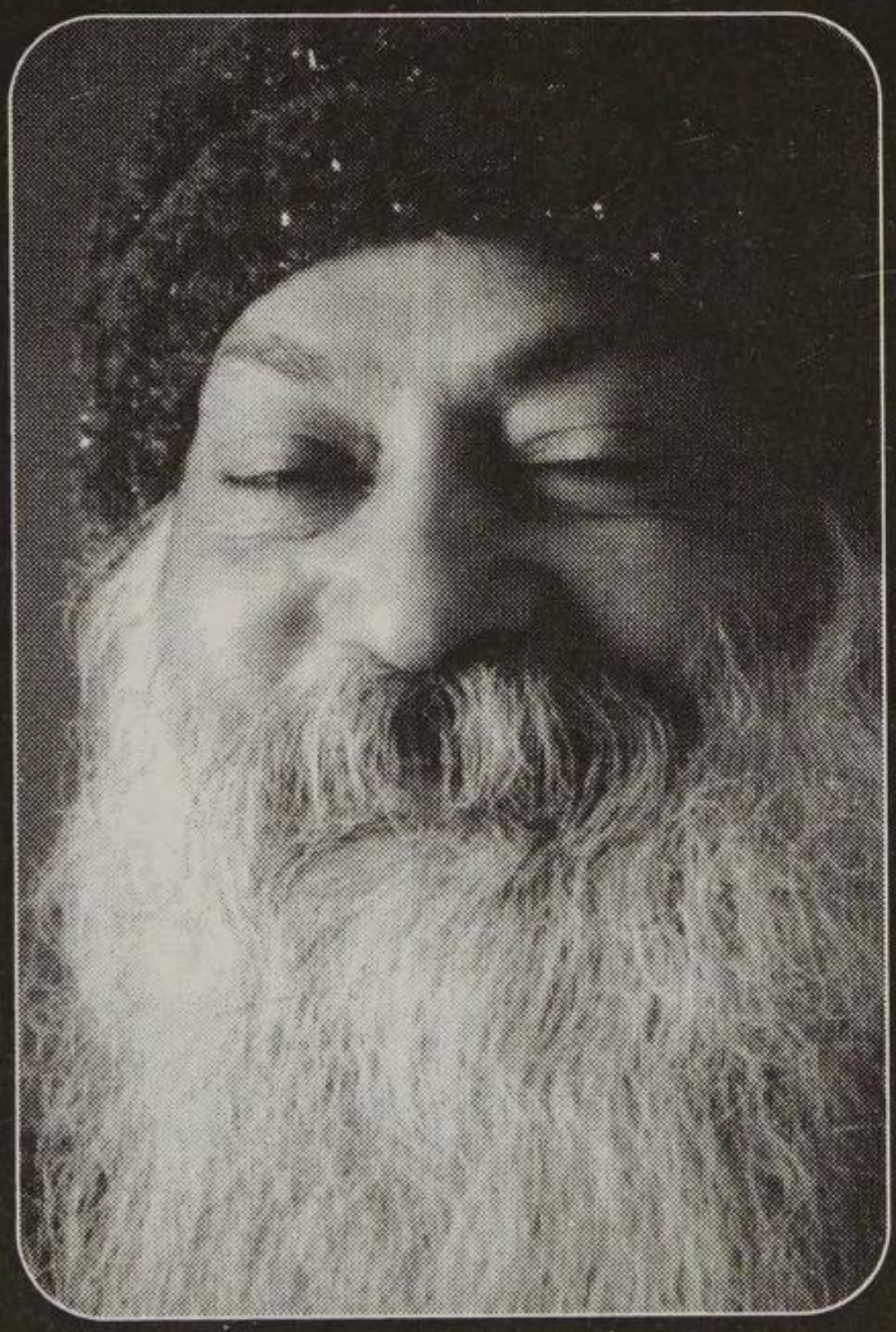
God can never be a concept. God cannot be reduced to an idea. God cannot be reduced to a belief.

Become ignorant. I have never heard of pundits and scholars reaching God. Sinners have been known to reach. but not scholars. The original sin is the sin of knowledge.

Remember the biblical story again and again. It is one of the most precious parables of human history. Adam has been turned out of the Garden of Eden because he has eaten of the Tree of Knowledge. His sin is his knowledge!

You will have to vomit your knowledge. Vomit the apple! Become innocent and ignorant again! And you will be attaining to a second childhood--and fortunate are those who can attain to second childhood, because through it, and only through it, is one bridged to God. But then there is no belief. One knows.

And remember, knowing and knowledge are different. Knowledge consists of beliefs, knowing consists of experience.



4

The Lotus Flower of the Law

Pitiful are
People who do not know
Nirvana and its eternal felicity!
How they grieve
At life, death, and mutability!

Shaka, and Amida too,
Were originally human beings;
Have I not also
The form of a man?

Wonderful, indeed,
The Lotus Flower of the Law!
However many ages may pass,
Still that same color.

The crescent moon
Becomes full, and wanes,
And nothing is left;
But still, there in the dawn,
The crescent moon!

Whenever we see them, all are
Just as they are:
The willow is green,
The flower is red.

A parable:

There was once a turkish teacher who wasn't really a teacher. He went to a foreign country and started to teach. Of course, the people there did not understand Turkish, but the man spoke with such authority and such drama that he soon had many devotees and followers. Then, one day, a group of Turks happened to pass by. When they listened to him, they understood what he was saying--bullshit! So they ran him out of town.

Afterwards, when the man returned to his home and was asked how his trip had been, he said, "Great...until these Turkish people came by and understood what I was saying .

The moral of the story being that it is possible to speak to people in a language they don't understand, but when they do understand, the bullshit stops for ever!

The appearance of Gautam the Buddha was one of the most phenomenal events of human consciousness. Whatsoever was going on in the name of religion before he appeared stopped for ever. He brought truth to such simplicity, to such felicity, to such grace. He spoke the way an enlightened person speaks--he spoke through his being. He was not a scholar, and he was not worried about speculation.

He had no abstract ideas; he was very down-to-earth.

And since then, Zen people have carried the flame down the ages. They speak, not because they have a philosophy to propound; they speak because they have seen something--it has to be conveyed. They speak as seers, not as thinkers. They speak as masters, not as believers.

Buddha transformed the very quality of religion. It was theology before him; after him it became anthropology. God was dethroned, man was enthroned. 'God' is not a relevant word with Buddha, 'man' is. He says: All that is needed is hidden inside human consciousness. Man has not to look up to the heavens, he has not to ask for any grace from anywhere. He has to become a light unto himself.

And the light is there, it is the very core of your life. Just one thing has happened, you have forgotten it. Not that you have lost it, just forgotten. Remember it, because that is very fundamental to Buddha's approach.

Life is a forgetfulness and a remembering. And that's all, and that's the whole story. one falls asleep and dreams a thousand and one things, and in the morning one wakes up and all the dreams are gone. So is life. We have fallen asleep--fallen asleep to our inner being. We have forgotten who we are. Hence, the world, the samsara. The samsara means the world of ten thousand things.

And we go on rushing from one thing to another thing--in search of a self. Because we have lost contact with our self, we are continuously searching for it. If you look deep down into the agony of man, this is the agony. He has forgotten who he is and is searching and asking, asking of everybody, "Who am I?" May not be so consciously....

That's what you are asking when you fall in love. You are asking your beloved to tell you who you are. Why do people feel so beautiful when they are in love? Because some identity starts arising. The woman you love says, "You are beautiful. You are intelligent, you are unique." She is

giving you a self.

When you say to the woman, "You are beautiful. I have never come across such a beautiful person. I cannot live without you, you are my life, my joy, my very existence," you are giving an identity to the woman. She was searching for it; she does not know who she is. Now you are creating a self She is creating a self for you, you are creating a self for her.

That's why people feel so at ease when they are in love. When love disappears, is broken, shattered, they are shattered. Why are you shattered? You are shattered because your identity is again lost, again you don't know who you are. It was the woman or the man who was giving you a certain kind of idea of who you are. Now the woman is gone and the idea is gone with her. Now again you are in darkness. Again you don't know, again you start searching for....

Why do you seek money and wealth? Just to have some identity. So that you know who you are, so that people can say who you are. Why do you go on searching for power, prestige? The same reason.

Man is in a constant search for the self. Man is in a constant identity crisis. And because in the past things were more settled, people were more at ease. Now things are changing so fast that again and again your identity is shattered.

Just think: in the old days, once you got married, you got married. You were not going to be searching again for a woman or for a man; it was a whole-life thing, a settlement. A certain idea would become fixed, slowly slowly, that you were the husband, the father of the children, this and that. But now it is difficult, and more so particularly in the West.

Every once in a while you will change the woman; every once in a while you will change the man. Again and again you will have to search for the identity.

In the past, people used to do the same work their whole life; it was traditional. Your grandfather was a carpenter, your father was a carpenter, you are a carpenter, your

children will be carpenters--you knew who you were. Now it is impossible to know. People go on changing their jobs; things are changing so fast....

You knew in the past where you belonged. You were an Indian, a Christian, a Hindu, a Chinese, a Buddhist.

Now you don't know any more. The world has come very much closer, boundaries have become false. The world has become a small village, a global village. Now you don't know. And now you know there is not much difference between a Hindu and a Christian or a Mohammedan; that identity is not of any help any more.

Who are you? This problem is one of the most fundamental problems. Modern man is very much puzzled. almost paralyzed.

Buddha says: It is not going to be of any help if you create a false identity. You can live with it your whole life, still you will not know who you are. The only way to know who you are is to go within yourself with great remembrance, with great mindfulness, with awareness. Asking from the outside, whatsoever you get is a pseudo-thing. Your woman, your man, your country, your religion, your church--they will give you a certain kind of identity. They will create a false self. But that is not real. And only the mediocre can be deceived by it, only the stupid can be deceived by it. The intelligent person sooner or later will have to see the point that these identities are from the outside: "In fact I don't know who I am. My being a husband does not say anything about me. My being a father or a mother does not say anything about me. My being a Christian or a Hindu does not say anything about me. I am still in darkness."

These labels may be of some help in the outside world but your identity card is not you. Your name is not you, even your photograph is not you, because you go on changing and the photograph remains static. It simply represents one moment in your life. It is not that it

represents you--one gesture in your life, and that too very superficial. For example, you were smiling and the photograph was taken, and you may have just been smiling for the photographer.

I have heard: One photographer was saying to a very very serious-looking man, "Just for a single moment, sir, smile. And then you can be your usual self again."

Now, this photograph of this serious man smiling is absolutely false; that smile is just on the lips. The photograph cannot penetrate inside you. In fact not even an X-ray can penetrate inside you--it may take the pictures of your bones but it cannot take your picture.

There is no way to see from the outside who you are. There is only one way, and that is to become alert inside, to awaken inside, to make great effort inside, so that you are not asleep there. Then only will you have the first glimpse of the real man.

And remember Ikkyu: One single glimpse of the real man and one is in love. The man who is searching for his identity cannot be in love; his love is also nothing but a search for the identity. Amongst other searches, that also is one. You write a book, you become a famous author, or you paint and you become a painter, or you sing and you become a singer. But these are all efforts to somehow categorize you, to identify who you are.

There is an ancient story about a philosopher who was very forgetful. He was so forgetful that in the night he would sleep with all his clothes on, even with his shoes on. Somebody suggested, "This is not a way to sleep--and how can one sleep with shoes on? and your hat on, and all the dress?"

And he said, "It is very difficult. If I put them away in the night, then in the morning I forget where I have put my shoes, where I have put my coat. And what is a coat? and what are shoes? and what is my hat? Everything becomes such a mess and it takes so much trouble to find and sort things out that I have decided never to do it again. Half my

day is wasted."

The man was a practical man. He said, "This is a simple thing. I know that you are a very forgetful man--you can do one thing. You can write, you can stick small labels on everything: 'This is my coat'. 'This is my shoe'. And you can keep a diary also: where you have put the shoes, underneath the bed; and where you have put your coat, and where your underwear is...you can just make notes."

That appealed to the philosopher, and he did it. And next morning he was really in a mess--he had never been in such a mess. Everything worked out. He found his shoes, they were underneath the bed. He found his coat, it was hanging there in the cupboard. He found his shirt--he found everything. And finally, he shouted, looking at the sky, "My God! But now where am I? Because I have forgotten to note it down!"

He looked in the bed, but he was not there. You can imagine the poor man's anguish. He searched all over the house, he looked in every nook and corner, and he was not there. And he came running out of the house shouting, "Please, somebody tell me where I am? Everything else I have found in its place; just one thing I forgot. I didn't write in the notebook where I have to find myself. I think was in the bed, but the bed is empty."

The story looks fictitious; it is not. It is your story. It is everybody's story. It is man's story. You know where your house is, you know your phone number, you know who your wife is, you know who your son is...you know you are a Hindu, Christian, Mohammedan, Indian, Japanese. But do you really know who you are and where you are? And you will be almost in as much bewilderment as that ancient philosopher.

But people don't ask this question, because this question creates such uneasiness. They avoid it. They go on living, avoiding it.

Buddha transformed the quality of religion. Religion

with Buddha became man-oriented. Before Buddha it was God-oriented. Now, God is not a problem at all--whose problem is God? How are you concerned with God? Seems to be a bogus problem, nobody's concern. Maybe priests have some investment in it, maybe politicians have some investment in it, but really it is not an existential question.

The existential question is: Who am I?

With Buddha, religion changed its quality. It became realistic, it became pragmatic. Buddha said: There is no need to be worried about God. Let him worry himself about himself--if he wants to know who he is he can ask, "Who am I?" Why should you be worried?

And in the first place, God is your creation. That is your ultimate effort to avoid yourself. You go on creating fictitious problems. There is one beautiful thing about fictitious problems: they can be solved, easily they can be solved. In fact the problem is fictitious--any fictitious answer will do. The disease is pseudo--any pseudo-medicine will do.

People become very much interested in pseudo-problems, and they think they are great seekers. Buddha hit them hard and shattered their ego, the ego of being a seeker. He said: f you are seeking and searching for God, you are simply befooling yourself.

God is nobody's problem I Just see the point. How can God be your problem? But people think it is a problem. B! making it a problem, they can avoid their own problems. They become too much occupied with God. They start thinking, they start collecting answers, they start philosophizing, speculating; they go into scriptures, and they are lost in the jungle of words. And they have forgotten the simple question that was really their question: Who am I? God may be the greatest escape.

It has been noted by psychologists that in times of anguish, misery, war, trouble, people start thinking of

abstract things--God, truth, heaven, after-life. In times of stress when people are very uneasy on this earth, they start looking at the sky. They focus their problems there so they can avoid the real problems of the earth. This has been watched, observed, again and again. After each year there is a great revival of religion--the so-called religion.

And you know it by your personal experience also. Whenever you are in misery, in pain, you remember God. Whenever you are happy, when you are flowing and life is a celebration, you don't care a bit about God, you don't remember. This is a simple experience; no psychologist is needed to observe it. Everybody can observe in his own life. What does it say? It simply says that when you are in anguish you have to avoid the anguish and you have to create a false problem to go away from it--a great occupation....

You start praying. And you had never prayed. In fact, when things were going well you had never gone to the priest. When things were going beautifully and you were succeeding in life and the life was a bed of roses, you didn't remember God. But when life becomes a bed of neurosis, then--then suddenly you remember God.

God is an escape.

Bertrand Russell is right in saying that if life on earth becomes really blissful people will forget all about God and there will be no religion. He is right, because he does not know the religion of Buddha. He knows Christianity. Yes, religions like Christianity and Hinduism will disappear. But if life is really happy on the earth, something like Buddha's message will become very very prevalent.

When life is going well, beautifully, and all is flowing and flowering, this question arises in the deepest core of your being: "Now is the time to know--who am I?" When life is not flowing, all is blocked and there is only misery and misery and all is hell, how can you ask "Who am I?" To

come that close to yourself is dangerous because there is only hellfire and nothing else. How can you come that close? How can you sit silently with closed eyes and look into yourself? You have to avoid, you have to escape, you have to run away. So anything will do.

And that's how things always happen. Whenever a society is in turmoil people become very much interested in occult, esoteric things. They start seeing UFO's, they start seeing beings from other planets, they start thinking of great things that are going to happen. They start going to the astrologers...and all kinds of nonsense .

Buddha brings a very sensible religion to the world. Empirical, experiential, existential. In Buddha's way, there is no God, no prayer.

And just think of your poor God, if he exists. What will his situation be?--just think of him. All kinds of people praying and shouting at him and complaining. And it has b en going on and on. Either he does not listen at all, or he must have gone crazy by now.

A great psychotherapist was asked by his student.... The student watched the great old man working from the morning till evening, continuously psychoanalyzing mad people, all kinds of nuts, listening to them. And he u as dead tired by the evening, he was a young man. And the old man was as fresh as he was in the morning.

One day he could not contain his curiosity. He asked, "What is the matter? How do you manage? The whole day listening to such horrible tales, nightmares, and you never become tired?"

And the old man said, "Who listens?"

God must be avoiding you.

I have heard:

A man who had all his life been very pious, and had prayed to God continually at least ten hours a day, died, and unlike his miserable brother, who was an atheist, he

died miserable and broke. His wife had left him, his partner had cheated him, his house had burned down, and his children were all delinquents. His brother, on the other hand, who had not prayed a single prayer in his life, was wealthy, had his health, a wonderful wife, fine children, and in short, a great time of it.

When the pious man finally came face to face with God, he asked, "Lord, I'm not complaining. You know I'm not complaining. When you took my house away, I prayed to you in thanks. I knew there was some good reason for it. And when my wife left, I again prayed in thanksgiving, because I knew you had a good reason for that; and when my children turned against me, again I prayed to you with thanks, since I know that nothing happens without your approval, and I have to bow to Divine Wisdom. But why did all these things happen to me who prayed to you ten hours at least every day, and not to my wicked brother who is an atheist?"

"Because," said the Lord in disgust, "you are such a NUDGE!"

You are such a bore. This man must have tortured God--ten hours every day. Just think of poor God!

Buddha relieved man of God, and Buddha relieved God of man. Buddha's approach is such that if Friedrich Nietzsche had been born in a Buddhist land, he could not have written that God is dead and that from now onward man is free. There would have been no need.

Buddha helped God disappear without any bloodshed. Nietzsche had to kill. Nietzsche says: God is dead; and not that he has died a natural death--we had to kill him, just to be free of him. How can man be free with God? If God is there, then religion becomes nothing but obedience. If God is there, then religion is reduced to obedience.

That's why in Christianity you don't talk about freedom, you don't talk about moksha. Moksha means absolute

freedom. And absolute freedom includes freedom from God! Otherwise, how can it be absolute? If there is somebody to whom you are responsible and answerable, you can't be free.

Friedrich Nietzsche's statement--God is dead and we had to murder him--is just a reaction created by Christianity and its obsession with obedience. Christianity has created slaves in the world. Nietzsche had to utter that word, had to utter that statement. If Nietzsche had not done it, then somebody else would have done it. It was a need, it was inevitable.

Christianity leaves no alternatives...it leaves only two alternatives: either commit suicide, lose all your freedom, become a zombie in the name of God; or, murder God and be free. And both are ugly--suicide or murder?

Buddhism does not give you such ugly alternatives. It simply says God is not the problem--the problem is man. God is an escape from the problem. Look into man, find out your source inside, and all will be solved.

And remember again, Buddha is not an atheist. He is not saying there is no God, but his concept of God is totally different. When you come to the deepest core of your being, to your very source, you will know that you are God.

Christianity says: You are sons of God. Buddhism says: When you come to know yourself, you are not sons--you are godhood itself. There is no God other than you, there is no God other than the universe. Hence Buddha never talks about God, because there is no God other than this. There is no that other than this. This is that. Existence is divine.

But to know this, no prayer is going to help. To know this, no philosophy is going to be of any support. To know this, one has to go utterly into oneself--with only one question like an arrow piercing your heart: Who am I? And the deeper you go, the deeper you will see that you don't exist as an individual.

That is the meaning of Buddha's doctrine of anatta--no-

self. You will not come to see any self inside you. The whole idea of being a person will slowly slowly melt, and there will be a kind of presence but no personality. The individual will disappear and there will be the universal. You will not be separate from existence, you will find yourself one with the whole.

Now the sutras:

Pitiful are
People who do not know
Nirvana and its eternal felicity!
How they grieve
At life, death, and mutability!

People suffer because they have forgotten their innermost no-self. Because they have forgotten their innermost presence, they have forgotten that they are one with the whole. How have they forgotten it? It is a natural rhythm. Whatsoever is given becomes so obvious that one tends to forget it. The new is remembered because it is such a sensation. You pass through the same garden again and again and again, and naturally you tend to forget. Trees are there but you don't look at them, you take them for granted. The birds are singing but you go with your inner chatter.

Just think: if you had lived in a desert and suddenly one fine morning you had come across a beautiful garden with trees and birds singing, would you have passed the same way as you pass your garden every day! You would have danced, you would have shouted in joy. you would have sung, you would have exploded! It would have been a great experience, you would have become very very aware and alert. All inner chattering would have stopped. But you pass through the same type of garden every day, and you tend to forget.

Remember the first day you saw your woman or your

man, how enchanted you were! how thrilled, how blissful! And now you sit with the same woman and you don't look at her face at all. It is a well-known fact that husbands cannot remember their wives' faces. Try. Try to remember how your wife looks, and you will be very much puzzled. You can remember how the neighbour's wife looks, what kind of sari she was wearing this morning--your neighbour's wife, not your wife. Your wife you have not looked at for years. If suddenly her face is changed by a magician you may become aware after months or years--because who ever looks at his own wife?

How long has it been that you have not touched her hand with a thrill, with a song in your heart? You take her hand in your hand; it is an empty gesture, you have to do it.

One day, a man came to his home and just saw his partner kissing his wife. The partner was very much afraid that the man would create trouble, but the man took the partner aside and said, "You puzzle me. I have to kiss that woman--but why you? I don' t see the point. I have to kiss that woman but why you? Have you gone mad or something?"

Sooner or later, you tend to forget that which is available. Others know in what a beautiful house you are living; you don't know. Others know what beautiful children you have; you don't know. Others think that you are fortunate, this and that; you don't know.

This is the problem: because we are our own selves, and we have been always that, from eternity, it is natural to forget all about it. Because of this natural tendency, one has forgotten oneself. And one has become interested in others, in those ten thousand things--the samsara.

You go on rushing from one new sensation into another new sensation. You don't have any time to sit for meditation. People come to me, and if I tell them to meditate they say, "But we don't have any time." They have enough time

to go to the movie, they have enough time to play cards--you can find them gathered together in Somendra's room playing poker. They have time to gossip. But for meditation? Suddenly there is a scarcity of time. They have time to fight, be angry, they have time to read the stupid newspapers--and how deeply they go into those newspapers! Those newspapers have become their gospels; they read every line, from the beginning to the end. But you talk about meditation and immediately, without a single thought, the reaction comes: "But we don't have any time!"

What are they really saying? They are saying that they are not interested in themselves. That they are not interested in sitting silently for one hour and looking into their own being. For what? They can earn money in that time, they can tend their shop, or they can do a thousand and one things. Why just go on gazing at your navel? For what? Nobody seems to be interested in oneself One is already there, so why bother? One is already that, so why bother?

Everybody is going out...but only when a person goes in does a person come to know what truth is.

Ikkyu says:

Pitiful are
People who do not know
Nirvana and its eternal felicity!

Yes, they have to be pitied. They are creating their Own misery, they are creating their own agony and their hell. They are putting fuel into the hellfire. They have to be pitied because they don't know what felicity, what grace arises when you go in. They don't know what kind of benediction is waiting for them. They don't know that life takes a totally new colour, a new vibe--the vibe of jubilation, the vibe of celebration--when you go in.

And they are all asking for happiness, and they are all

creating misery. People go on asking for happiness and go on creating misery; they have to be pitied. Ikkyu is right--he says:

Pitiful are
People who do not know
Nirvana and its eternal felicity!

Go in, and you will come across the greatest treasure there is. And you will come to know that all that you have been seeking, down the ages, through so many lives, has always been available inside you, has been there from the very beginning, has been part of your nature.

And that's why you are missing it--because you look without and it is within. You search out and it is in. So your search and the treasure never meet.

Before you go trekking the infinite ways of the outer world, have a little glimpse of the inner. Before you go searching out, this seems to be very pragmatic and realistic, to have a look within. Who knows? Buddhas may be right. And all the Buddhas cannot be wrong! Whosoever has looked within has found it, without any exception. And whosoever has been looking without has not found it--without any exception, that too. All those who have been searching in the world have been failing and failing. Only frustration comes in the end, and failure.

Just think of those people--a Gautama Buddha, a Krishna, a Christ, a Zarathustra, a Lao Tzu--think of those people, how blissful they look, what fragrance they have. From where does it come? Just sitting silently by their side and one is thrilled, enchanted. These people have some magic, some miracle is constantly happening around them. From where does it come? They don't have any visible power of the world. They don't have anything that you think one needs to be happy.

It is reported: when Buddha came for the first time to Varanasi, he was staying outside Varanasi underneath a tree, a great banyan tree. It was evening and the sunrays were filtering the sunset, and the clouds were aflame with the setting sun. And through the thick foliage of the tree those red rays were falling on Buddha's face, and he was sitting there relaxed.

The king of Varanasi came on his chariot. Accidentally, he saw this man by the side of the road, sitting so beautifully. in such splendour. That man, that king, had everything that one can desire. And do you know where he was going? He was going to commit suicide!--because he was tired, he was exhausted, frustrated. He had seen the futility of all and he had decided, "Now enough is enough." And he was going on the chariot to the mountains to kill himself.

And then he saw on the road this beautiful man, this beggar, sitting there in such a let-go that even the sunset was nothing compared to his beauty. He was looking so golden. And a great silence was surrounding the tree--it was not the silence of the tree, certainly, because the king had passed by many trees.

When a Buddha sits, he creates his own space. The Eastern scriptures say: Wherever a Buddha lives, a certain space is created around him. Those who live in that space start growing in spite of themselves. They are taken by the tide, they start riding on the wave of the Buddha. That is the meaning of 'Buddhafield'.

It was utterly quiet! The king had never seen such silence, such pregnant silence, such alive silence. He had seen the silence that exists in the cemeteries. Because he had never seen a man like Buddha, he had no idea of what real silence is. For the first time it was there, almost tangible. You could have touched it, you could have taken it in your hand. You could have tasted it, you could have put it against your cheek and felt its coolness. It was there, so visible.

He stopped the chariot. He said to his charioteer, 'Stop! I will have to think again. If this man can be so blissful and so silent, maybe there is still something in life that I have not searched for. Forget about my suicide! This man has changed my mind, this man has changed my being. The presence of this man is enough of a proof that life can be lived in some other way too. I don't know what way in it..."

He said to the Buddha, "I have only one question to ask: I don't see anything around you, just a begging-bowl. How can one be so happy with just one begging-bowl? I am not happy with a great kingdom! And you look so utterly happy, so ultimately happy."

Buddha opened his eyes, those lotus eyes...and the king could not believe that he was suddenly bowing down and touching Buddha's feet. Something had happened in him--just that look, those two eyes. Those two eyes behind which there was no person but only presence. Just a radiation. Those two empty eyes, and yet full of existence. Empty of the ego, but full of being. Those two knowing eyes must have penetrated that king's being like two rays of light. He was touched, moved.

Buddha said, "The situation that you are in, I was also in that situation one day. I can understand you. I was also the son of a great emperor. I have lived in the palaces, I have lived in luxuries, I know. I know the misery of having all and yet having nothing. I can understand you--nobody will be able to understand you, but I can understand you. I was exactly like you! and I had also contemplated suicide many times, many many times.

"But I say to you: Look into my eyes. One day I was in the same state as you are in today. And I say to you, you can be in the same state one day in which I am--because we are both the same."

Every man has a built-in possibility to explode, to bloom, to become a lotus.

Pitiful are
People who do not know
Nirvana and its eternal felicity!
How they grieve
At life, death, and mutability!

What is people's grief? What is their misery? Their misery is: they have created an ego. They had to create it--because they don't know their self, and one cannot live without a self. They don't know who they are, and one cannot live, cannot exist, without knowing who one is. So what to do? They have created a false self.

To search for the real seems to be arduous. To create a synthetic, artificial, plastic self seems to be very easy. We have created the ego as a substitute. It is a false center that gives us a feeling that we know who we are. But this false self is constantly in danger. It is false--it has to be continuously supported.

Remember always, if you have to support something continuously, then it is false. The real remains of its own accord: the false has to be supported. If you have to remind yourself continuously that if you don't support it it will be gone, that simply means it is false.

The real cannot be gone; there is no way where it can go. The real remains. Just think: you have not looked into yourself for millions of lives--still it is there. It does not need your support. It is your very ground. It supports you! How can it need your support? But the ego needs your support.

So if you have a certain amount of money in the bank, you have to go on growing that amount; otherwise, your ego starts feeling suffocated. If you have a certain prestige in the society, you have to go on increasing it. You have to go on puffing up your ego continuously; if you stop puffing, it starts dying. It is like pedalling a bicycle--you have to continuously pedal it. If you stop pedalling you will fall. The ego needs

continuous effort; it has to be created again and again.

That's why every day you are waiting for people to support you. Your woman had said yesterday, "You are a beautiful man." Now it is pointless to say it again and again, because she has said it once. But today also you are waiting for her to say that you are one of the most beautiful men. It is just a repetition. Now there is no point in saying it. She has said it! But you are waiting, and again it thrills you. And tomorrow again you will be waiting, and it will thrill you.

Pedalling.

Somebody respects you; he has to go on respecting you. In fact, he has to go on growing in his respect towards you, only then can your ego be supported.

And the problem is that you cannot keep this ego when you are dying--because when you are dying, how can you support something? So when death comes, ego starts disappearing. You cannot pedal any more--how can you go on bicycling when you are dying?

Hence the fear of death--because death will destroy your ego. Death cannot destroy you but death is going to destroy your ego. Hence the fear of death. Everybody is afraid of death.

And be mindful: not only are you afraid of death, you are afraid of life too. Ego is afraid of life too, because in deep life experiences also it dies. When you really fall in love...why do you call it 'fall'? You fall from the ego. When you fall in love, the ego is shattered. That's why the real egoist never loves anybody--he cannot, because he will have to descend from his ego tower, he will have to come down. He will have to hold the hand of an ordinary woman or ordinary man. He will have to behave in an ordinary way.

Many people become celibates, not because they are religious but just because they are egoists. It feels very good that you don't need anybody; ego feels very good. You need not bow down to anybody. In love one has to bow down, one

has to surrender. One has to behave in a human way, one has to be a human being. Love is dangerous for the ego.

And love is life! If you are afraid of love, you are afraid of life. So in life situations also the ego is continuously afraid. It is a false thing, managed, somehow manipulated. It needs a thousand and one props. And still it remains continuously afraid, because life goes on changing. Nothing ever remains the same, it is a river.

So how can you believe that today people are respecting you, tomorrow they will also respect you? How can you believe that tomorrow you will be able to keep to your ego? Who knows? Today you are a prime minister, tomorrow you may not be. Yesterday you were not a prime minister, today you are; there is no certainty for tomorrow. Just as you have snatched the prime-ministership from somebody else, somebody else is going to snatch it from you--because millions of people are trying to become prime ministers; everybody is trying in his own way. How can you be safe? Where everybody is making all kinds of efforts to become the prime minister, how can you be safe? You can't sleep, you can't relax, you have to be continuously on guard. You have to watch where people are moving, what they are doing. Even the closest colleagues you have to watch, because they are the most dangerous. Because they are so close, they can topple you any moment. Even the colleagues are enemies.

Machiavelli says: In polities there are no friends, there cannot be. Machiavelli says: Don't reveal your secrets even to your friends, because if they turn some day and become your enemies then you will be caught, then you will be in trouble.

If you have money you have to be constantly afraid, because everybody is ready to grab it. That's how you got it in the first place, so you know the way, how to get it. In this life, where everything is constantly changing, you cannot remain certain.

So these three things are constantly creating misery,

grief: life, death, mutability.

And the irony is that deep inside there is a space which is eternal, which never changes. There is a space in you which is timeless, is never affected by any changes in time, through time; remains transcendental, beyond. There is a space in you which is life, pure life, and knows nothing of death. There is a space in you which is pure love! And you are afraid of love and you are afraid of life and you are afraid of death and you are afraid of change.

This whole thing is happening because you have created a false substitute. The false substitute seems to be appealing because everybody is having it. People imitate. Have you just watched it? If your neighbour purchases a bigger car than you, suddenly you also need a bigger car. Just a moment before, there was no need; just a moment before, you had not thought about a bigger car. Now how, suddenly, has the need arisen? Because the neighbour has purchased one. Now he is having a bigger ego and your ego is threatened; you have to purchase a bigger car. Even if you cannot afford it, you have to purchase it.

People go on wasting their lives in such things which they don't need in the first place. People go on accumulating things which they don't need. People go on putting their money into things which they will never need, to impress people whom they don't like. This is something! People even go on putting their money into things--money that they don't have. They may be getting it two years afterwards; they purchase a car in instalments. The money they don't have right now, but they have to put that money into a car that they don't need, to impress people that they don't like.

I have heard:

Two cows were grazing in a pasture alongside a highway when a milk truck drove by. On the side of the truck was printed: PASTEURIZED HOMOGENIZED, GRADE A, VITAMIN B ADDED. One cow turned to the other and

said: "Makes you feel sort of inadequate, doesn't it?"

People are having such big balloons, balloons of egos, and one starts feeling inadequate. Somebody is having this, somebody is having that--and you start feeling poor. You are not poor! Comparison brings poverty.

And the really rich man is one who lives without comparison. How can he be poor? Drop comparisons and you are rich; then you will never be poor. Go on comparing and you will remain poor--howsoever rich you become is irrelevant. You will always remain poor, because there will always be somebody who has more.

And there are millions of things, so there are millions of poverties. Somebody has a beautiful wife; you are poor. Somebody has a bigger car; you are poor. Somebody has a bigger house; you are poor. Somebody is taller than you, and you are poor. How many poverties! As many poverties as there are things.

Drop comparison. But the ego lives through comparison.

Shaka, and Amida too,
Were originally human beings;
Have I not also
The form of a man?

Shaka is buddha's name. He came from the clan of Shakas, hence he is called Shaka. Amida is a name of another Buddha, Amitabh--amida is the Japanese form of Amitabh. But they both are human beings, Ikkyu is saying.

Shaka, and Amida too,
Were originally human beings;
Have I not also
The form of a man?

This is what I mean when I say Buddhism destroyed

theology and created a new kind of religion--created an anthropological, a man-centered religion. Buddha gave such dignity to man as has never been given before or since. Buddha made man the highest peak of consciousness. Buddha loved man and respected humanity.

Buddha says: You are just like me! You need not be worried. If I can become a Buddha, you can become a Buddha. And to be enlightened is nothing special; it is your birthright.

Wonderful, indeed,
The Lotus Flower of the Law!
However many ages may pass,
Still that same colour.

And what is Buddhahood? What is this Buddhahood every man can attain to? It is an inner opening, the opening of your inner core, Your inner core becoming a lotus.

Wonderful, indeed,
The Lotus Flower of the Law!
However many ages may pass,
Still that same colour.

And it is unchanging, it is timeless, it is eternal. Once you have seen that flowering inside, death disappears. Once you have seen that flowering inside, fear disappears. Once you have seen that flowering inside, your life becomes fragrant. Your life becomes a song, a celebration. Then life has benediction and beauty and beatitude.

This inner lotus, everybody is carrying it and nobody comes to be aware of it. Our whole awareness has become obsessed with things. Relieve your awareness from things, take an about-turn. And I am not saying take the about-turn for ever; I am saying just once in a while take the about-turn. That's what meditation is all about.

For sixty minutes every day, just forget about the world. Let the world disappear from you, and you disappear from the world. Take an about-turn, a one-hundred-and-eighty-degree turn, and just look inside. In the beginning, you will see only clouds. Don't be worried about them; those clouds are created by your repressions. You will come across anger, hatred, greed, and all kinds of black holes. You have repressed them, so they are there. And your so-called religions have taught you to repress them, so they are there like wounds. You have been hiding them.

That's why my emphasis is first on catharsis. Unless you go through great catharsis you will have to pass through many clouds. It will be tiring, and you may be so impatient that you may turn back into the world. and you will say, "There is nothing. There is no lotus and no fragrance, there is only stink, rubbish."

You know it. when you close your eyes and you start moving in, what do you come across? You don't come across those beautiful lands Buddhas talk about. You come across hells, agonies, repressed there, waiting for you. Anger of many lives accumulating. It is all a mess there, so one wants to remain outside. One wants to go to the movie, to the club, to meet people and gossip. One wants to remain occupied till one is tired and falls asleep. That's the way you are living, that's your style of life.

So when one starts looking in, naturally one is very much puzzled. Buddhas say that there is great benediction, great fragrance, you come across lotus flowers blooming--and such fragrance that it is eternal. And the colour of the flowers remains the same; it is not a changing phenomenon. They talk about this paradise, they talk about this kingdom of God that is within you. And when you go in, you only come across hell.

You see not Buddha lands but Adolf Hitler concentration camps. Naturally, you start thinking that this is all

nonsense, it is better to remain outside. And why go on playing with your wounds?--it hurts too. And pus starts oozing out of The wounds and it is dirty.

But catharsis helps. If you cathart, if you go through chaotic meditations, you throw all these clouds outside, all these darknesses outside, then mindfulness becomes easier.

That is my reason why I emphasize first chaotic meditations and then silent meditations. First active meditations, then passive meditations. You can move into passivity only when all that is there like junk has been thrown out. Anger has been thrown out, greed has been thrown out...layer upon layer, these thins are there. But once you have thrown them out, you can easily slip in. There is nothing to hinder.

And suddenly the bright light of the Buddha land. And suddenly you are in a totally different world--the world of the Lotus Law, the world of Dharma, the world of Tao.

Wonderful, indeed,
The Lotus Flower of the Law!
However many ages may pass,
Still that same colour.

The crescent moon
Becomes full, and wanes,
And nothing is left;
But still, there in the dawn,
The crescent moon!

Individual lives come and go, but the eternal life remains. It is like the moon--you see? For fifteen days it becomes bigger and bigger and bigger, and then comes the full-moon night. Then it starts becoming smaller and smaller and smaller, and then one night it has disappeared completely. But do you think the moon disappears or appears? The moon

remains the same; it is always there. The appearance and disappearance is only of the appearance of the moon. The reality of the moon is always there.

The crescent moon
Becomes full, and wanes,
And nothing is left;
But still, there in the dawn,
The crescent moon!

So you live in two dimensions, on two planes. In the Upanishads they have the story, the parable or the metaphor, of two birds living in the same tree, absolutely alike. One bird sitting on the highest branch, utterly quiet, silent, unmoving, doing nothing, with closed eyes, somewhere in. The other bird on the lowest branches, jumping from one branch to another, hankering for this flower, for that fruit, competing with this or with that, jealous of this and that--in a continuous restlessness.

Slowly slowly, the bird, the restless bird, becomes tired of restlessness. And one day he looks up and sees the other bird who is exactly like him--exactly like him, just a replica--and is so silent, is so restful, is so calm, so collected, as if the other bird exists not. There is only silence. The restless bird becomes attracted by this magic, starts moving towards the upper branch...the beginning of disciplehood. comes closer and closer and closer and closer, and finally become one with the other bird.

And the Upanishads say these two birds are not two: two aspects of consciousness. And each one has these two aspects. On the tree of life your innermost witness is sitting right now. The Lotus Flower is blooming in all its beauty and grandeur and splendour. And you are jumping from one branch to another--competing, jealous, angry, hateful, fighting, doing a thousand and one things and getting

frustrated and frustrated....

Look up! And remember, 'look up' means exactly what is meant by 'look in'. 'Look out' means 'look down'; 'look up' means 'look in'--they are synonymous. Look up or look in, and suddenly there is a being sitting inside you, a Buddha. And one starts moving, attracted by the charisma, by the magic of this silence, and one day becomes one with the innermost core.

All changes happen to this restless bird--the rising moon, the waning moon. Nothing happens to the other bird--the witness--it is always the same.

Whenever we see them, all are
Just as they are:
The willow is green,
The flower is red.

And nothing changes in the world, remember. When you go in, nothing changes in the world. Just you change, your attitude changes, your vision changes. The world remains the same, it goes on the same. Rivers go on flowing, the birds go on singing, flowers go on blooming...the world continues the same. But you are no more the same.

And when you look at the outside from that inner vision, things also now have a new beauty.

Whenever we see them, all are
Just as they are...

Now you can see things as they are. Before that, you have not seen things, never, as they are. For example, you are passing by the side of the garden of your neighbour, and a beautiful roseflower has bloomed. Can you see this roseflower just as it is? You cannot; there is jealousy which will prevent you. It has bloomed in your neighbour's garden, not in your garden--how can you enjoy it? In fact you are hurt,

you are offended by it, because your own flowers look so tiny. There is comparison. You are not feeling good. Just see the nonsense of it. Such a beautiful rose, but the idea that "It is not in my garden, it does not enhance my ego," and you miss the beauty of it. Now you want to possess it.

You see a beautiful woman passing by, but she is somebody else's woman, not yours. You would like to possess this woman. You can appreciate this beauty only when you can possess. In fact, to possess beauty is to kill it. How can you possess beauty if you love it? It is impossible. To love and to possess are antagonistic, contradictory; they can't go together. The moment you possess beauty, you have already killed it. You have reduced it to a thing, it is a commodity.

Beauty can be loved, enjoyed, only when there is no possessiveness. So when a man has become transformed by his inner vision, when he has reached into his innermost core and seen all the games of the ego are false, and has settled there in the eternity--the joy of it and the silence of it--has become only a witness, then he opens his eyes: now he can see things as they are.

The flower is just a flower, it is nobody's. The beautiful woman is just beautiful, she is nobody's. How can a woman be somebody's? Suddenly existence appears as it is, all I-thou gone. And when I-thou is gone, conflict disappears. In that consciousness

The willow is green,
The flower is red.

The flower is not less red because it has bloomed in the neighbour's garden. The willow is not less green because it is not yours. The willow is not less green because you are sad. Have you watched it? Things change with your mood. If you are happy the moon looks beautiful and very happy. And when you are sad the moon looks sad and very

miserable: You project your moods on things.

When a man has reached to his ultimate core, there is no more any projection. He sees things as they are. He is never unhappy, never happy now; all those dualities are gone. He remains non-dual, he remains eternally silent, calm and quiet and blissful. Now things are as they are...

The willow is green,
The flower is red.

Buddhism helps people to attain to great aesthetic sensibility. It is not an accident that Zen masters write poetry. Nobody has ever heard of Catholic monks painting, nobody has ever heard of Hindu sannyasins painting. Buddhism released great creativity into the world. Why? Other religions have been very uncreative, other religions have been very very dull--the flavour of life is missing. They have not helped people to dance, to sing, to paint, to play.

Zen seems to be the best that has happened up to now.

My vision of religion is also that of creativity. You come closer to God through creativity, you come closer to the creator through creativity. Creativity should be one of the fundamental criterions of a religious person.

Create! Let creativity be your religion, and you will never be lost again. The more you create, the more you will grow in. It happens both the ways. If you create more, you grow in more. If you grow in more, you create more.

If religion is just negative and life-denying it becomes ugly, it becomes a monster. When religion is creative and helps you to see the greenness of the world and the rosing of the roses and helps you to hear these birds in a crystal-clear way, helps you to feel and be sensitive to the silences, pauses in existence, to the sounds...helps you to be in such a harmony that you can feel the harmony of the whole.... To feel the harmony of the whole is to become holy.

5

Gladly Beyond any Experience

Do the moments of clarity and insight give birth to a sense of humour?

Is the purpose of the therapy groups to bring the participants to their natural self?

How to be total?
How to give everything?

How can the new commune be separate from the rest of the world when it is a marketplace?

What's the difference between "Cogito, ergo sum," and "Coito, ergo sum"?

What are we doing here?

The voice of your eyes....

The first question

Though your lecture was quite serious and deep yesterday, there were strange tickles and laughter arising in me. Somewhere deep within, there was a sense of humour as a subtle undercurrent. Tears often rolled down!

Do the moments of clarity and insight give birth to sense of humour? And what are the tears?

Yes, Chinmaya, clarity always brings a sense of humour. One starts laughing, not at others but at oneself. At the whole ridiculousness of the ego games, at the whole stupidity of human mind. And when there is laughter, tears are not far away; they are aspects of one energy. They are not diametrically opposite, they are complementary.

Whenever there is deep laughter, there are bound to be tears following it. And whenever there are deep tears. Laughter will be coming soon. They go together, they are parts of one climate the climate of clarity, depth, insight.

You may be surprised to know that schizophrenics cannot laugh--and a person who cannot laugh has something of schizophrenia in him, is mentally ill. Schizophrenics start laughing only when they are getting

out of their schizophrenia. It has been observed that the psychoanalyst can terminate the treatment once he sees the schizophrenic laughing. This is a fact of great importance.

So many so-called saints are really schizophrenic--they cannot laugh. And if you cannot laugh, how can you weep? how can you cry? Both become impossible. When laughter and crying are impossible; your heart is completely dosed. You don't have any emotions, you start living only in the head. Your whole reality consists of thoughts. Thoughts are dry--they cannot bring laughter, they cannot bring tears. Tears and laughter come from the heart. And clarity is not of the mind, clarity is of the heart. Confusion is of the mind.

So, Chinmaya, it has been a good experience. Your schizophrenia is disappearing; I can terminate the treatment. Laugh more, cry more, become a child again. Seriousness is your disease: drop seriousness.

And never be confused between seriousness and sincerity--seriousness is not sincerity. Sincerity need not be serious; sincerity can have laughter, can cry, can weep. Seriousness is a blocked stage of mind, a stage where you cannot flow. A state of unflow stagnancy. Serious people are ill people.

Religion has been destroyed by serious people. And there is one thing about the serious people that you have to be reminded of again and again: serious people are very articulate, because they live in the head. They are logic-choppers. They can express well. And because they have no heart, because they cannot feel, they are very authoritative. A man of feeling cannot be authoritative--how can compassion be authoritative?

And a man of feeling always hesitates; he cannot make dogmatic statements. The man of feeling whispers, persuades. The man of feeling cannot convince; he comes indirectly, like a subtle breeze. But the serious person, the person who lives in the head, the schizophrenic, he is articulate, verbal, logical, rational, loud, authoritative. And

because of these qualities, he starts gathering a following.

All political leaders are schizophrenic. The crowd follows them because of their dogmatic statements; their dogmatic statements convince people. People are very vague, uncertain, insecure--they need somebody to make them feel secure. He may be a fool, he may be just like an Adolf Hitler....

It is a great puzzle to those who ponder over human problems how Adolf Hitler--a mediocre person, of below average IQ--could convince a country like Germany, an intellectual country, an intelligent country, a country of professors, philosophers, thinkers. How was it possible that this idiotic person, Adolf Hitler, could convince people? And such an intelligent race!

To me, it is not a problem at all. I can see through and through how it happened. Adolf Hitler was dogmatic. Whatsoever he said, he said it absolutely. Only a foolish person can be dogmatic.

Lao Tzu hesitates. Lao Tzu says: I walk as one walks in cold winter in a cold stream. Everybody is certain except me. I am uncertain, I hesitate. I cannot claim knowledge, because all is so mysterious.

Now, Lao Tzu is not going to convince people. If you hesitate, nobody is going to follow you. People are in deep confusion. People need somebody to shout loudly in their ears--so loudly that they are convinced: "This man must be true, this man must be in the know about things. How can he shout so loudly? how can he argue so loudly? Only truth can be so loud." They are mistaken.

And these dogmatic people go on repeating. Adolf Hitler continued to repeat the same theme: Slowly slowly, when all untruth is repeated again and again it starts appearing like a truth. And people need somebody to lean to. They are uncertain, they need somebody who is absolutely certain.

Politics is dominated by schizophrenics. Religion is also

dominated by schizophrenics. Because these people are very very articulate, convincing, they lead masses, religions are founded, churches are founded, organizations are made.

Jesus could not manage to lead many people--do you know? It has been estimated that he had a following not bigger than five hundred. And when he was crucified, thousands gathered to jeer at him. He had only twelve close disciples, only twelve--a man of the qualities of Jesus! What happened? Was he not convincing?

He was not convincing the way people need. He was saying things in a mysterious way--in parables, in metaphors, in poetry. He was not logical, he was utterly illogical. He was vague. He was hinting, pointing, but he was not assertive.

Christianity was not born with Christ, it was born with Saint Paul--who must have been a schizophrenic, certainly. First he was against Christ--his name was Saul--and he was so against that he wanted to destroy all the Christians and all the followers. He was moving towards the country where Jesus' followers were slowly slowly gathering, slowly slowly becoming courageous, slowly slowly starting to teach people, spreading the message--he was going there to argue, to discuss, to defeat.

And on the road something happened. He was possessed by the spirit of Christ--that's how the story goes. He fell down on the road, dust in his mouth. He could not believe it! He saw Jesus. He asked forgiveness, he became converted--from Saul he became Paul. And this man was the founder of Christianity.

Now, what actually happened in psychological terms? This man must have had a split personality, he must have been a schizophrenic. Nobody appeared--no Christ appeared. But he was so much against Christ--that was one part of his mind which was against--and he was completely unaware of another part. When he went deep into that part

which was against Christ, the pendulum swung from one extreme to another extreme. That's how it always happens.

He was going to persecute Christians--that small number of people who were talking of Jesus and remembering old things and the man and the beauty of that man. And the suffering that he went through for them, and the message that he had given to them--slowly slowly the word was spreading. And this man was going to persecute these people. And he was able to argue well. Jesus' followers would not have been able to convince him; he would have convinced them. They were simple people, innocent people--farmers and fisherman and carpenters--not very educated either.

But when you go to one extreme, then the pendulum swings of its own accord. It swung, it moved to the other extreme. The other part of his being took possession of him. That's what actually happened. He had a dream, a vision--there was no Christ, but he saw him. And he was convinced and he was converted. And this schizophrenic created the whole Christianity. He was going to persecute Christians: he converted the whole world to Christianity. He created the church.

It has always been so. Whenever a religion is born, sooner or later schizophrenics will catch hold of it. They are great leaders; they convince people. Their impact is great, their slogans convert people. They are loud, logical; they collect proofs, they argue.

Because of these people, no religion remains pure for long. The really religious persons are those who are not articulate, who are innocent. Who are simple, meditative, loving--they cannot convince anybody. They simply live the religion. But they cannot create great religions; great religious empires they cannot create.

It is good that humour is arising in Chinmaya. Allow it, don't crush it. Help it to come, let it surface. Humour will

join your split parts, humour will glue your fragments into one whole. Have you not observed it? When you have a hearty laugh, suddenly all fragments disappear and you become one. When you laugh, your soul and your body are one--they laugh together. When you think, your body and soul are separate. When you cry, your body and soul are one; they function in harmony.

Remember always: all those things are good, for the good, which make you one whole. Laughter, crying, dancing, singing--all that makes you one piece, in which you function as one harmony, not separate. Thinking can go on in the head, and the body can go on doing a thousand and one things; you can go on eating, and the mind can go on thinking. This is split. You walk on the road: the body is walking and you are thinking. Not thinking of the road, not thinking of the trees that surround it, not thinking of the sun, not thinking of the people who are passing, but thinking of other things, of other worlds.

But laugh, and if the laugh is really deep, if it is not just a pseudo-laugh, just on the lips, suddenly you feel your body and your soul are functioning together. It is not only in the body, it goes deepest into your core. It arises from your very being and spreads towards the circumference. You are one in laughter.

Or in crying, or in dancing, or in singing! Whatsoever makes you feel one is good, is meditative, is prayerful.

The second question

Is the purpose of the therapy groups to bring the participants to their natural self? If so, isn't the effort to be natural unnatural? If not, what is the essential difference between natural and unnatural?

The purpose of the therapy groups is not to bring the participants to their natural self--not at all. The purpose of

the therapy groups is to bring you to the point where you can see your unnaturalness. Nobody can bring you to your natural self; there can be no method, no technique, no device, which can bring you to your natural self--because all that you will do will make you more and more unnatural.

Then what is the purpose of a therapy group? It simply makes you aware of the unnatural patterns that you have evolved in your being. It simply helps you to see the unnaturalness of your life, that's all. Seeing it, it starts dispersing. To see it is to annihilate it, because once you have seen something as unnatural in your being, you cannot persist in it any longer. And seeing something as unnatural, you have also felt what is natural--but that is indirect, that is vague, that is not clear. What is clear is this, that you have seen that something is unnatural in you. Seeing the unnatural you can feel the natural. Seeing the unnatural, you cannot support it any more. It existed because of your support--nothing can exist without your support. Your co-operation is needed.

If you co-operate something exists. Certainly the unnatural cannot exist without your co-operation. From where will it get the energy? The natural can exist without your co-operation, but the unnatural cannot exist. The unnatural needs constant support, it needs constant care, it needs constant control. Once you have seen that this is unnatural, your grip on it becomes loose. Your fist opens of its own accord.

The group is not a device to open your fist. It is just to help you see that what you are doing is unnatural. In that very seeing, the transformation.

You ask: Is the purpose of the therapy groups to bring the participants to their natural self?

No, that is not the purpose. The purpose is simply to make you aware of where you are, what you have done to yourself--what harm you have been doing continuously and

you are still doing. What wounds you are creating in your being. On each of the wounds is your signature--that is the purpose of the group, to make you alert about your signature. That it is signed by you, that nobody else has been doing it. That all the chains that you have around yourself are created by you. That the prison you live in is your own work. Nobody is doing it to you.

Seeing it, that "I am creating my own prison," how long can you go on creating it? If you want to live in the prison, that's another matter--but nobody ever wants to live in the prison. People live because they think, "Others are creating the prisons, what can we do?" They always go on throwing the responsibility on somebody else. Down the ages, they have found new and different devices, but the purpose remains the same: throw the responsibility on somebody else.

And you will be surprised at what excuses man has been trying to find. In the ancient days, man used to think, "This is the way God has made us, so the responsibility is God's--what can we do? We are just creatures, and we are the way he has made us. We have to live this misery. This is destined."

That was a trick. You are relieving yourself of all responsibility. But it happens that when a trick has worked for long it becomes a cliche. It works no more; people are fed up with it. They start searching for new ideas, but the purpose remains the same.

Marx says it is the society, the economic structure of the society--the exploitation, the exploiters, the imperialists, the capitalists, they are doing the harm, they are the reason. Again you are relieved of the responsibility. So what can you do? The slavery is imposed upon you, you have been made miserable. Unless the revolution Comes nothing is going to happen. So you can postpone.

And the revolution never comes; it has not happened yet. Not in Russia, not in China--nowhere. The revolution

never comes; it is just a postponement. Man is as miserable in Russia as he is anywhere else, as much in the mire of the mind as anywhere else. Jealousy is as much in Russia as anywhere else. Anger is as much, violence is as much.

nothing has changed.

Freud says it is because of the upbringing. In your childhood you have been brought up wrongly--what can you do? It has already happened; now there is no way of undoing it. At the most, you can accept it and live it. Or you can go on fighting unnecessarily--but there is no hope.

Freud is one of the greatest pessimists ever. He says there is no hope for man, because in childhood the pattern is settled--settled for ever. Then you go on repeating the pattern. Again the responsibility is thrown. So your mother is responsible. And the mother thinks what can she do?--her own mother is responsible...and so on and so forth.

These are all devices, but the purpose is the same--different devices for the same purpose. What is the purpose? To take responsibility off your shoulders.

The group therapy is to make you aware that neither God is responsible nor is society responsible nor are parent? responsible. If there is anybody who is responsible it is you? A group process is a hammering of this simple fact--that it is you who are responsible. And this hammering has a great significance. Because once you understand that "This is me, I myself am doing wrong to myself," then the doors open. Then there is hope. Then something is possible.

Revolution is possible through responsibility, individual responsibility. You can transmute; you can drop those old patterns. They are not your destiny. But if you accept them as your destiny they become your destiny. It is all a question of whether to support them or not.

And I am not saying that parents have not done something to you, remember. And I am not saying that the society has not done anything to you--I am not saying that

either. The society has done much, the parents have done much, the education and the priest, they have done much. But, still, the ultimate key is in your hands. You can drop it, you can drop the whole conditioning. Whatsoever they have done, you can erase it--because your consciousness at the deepest core always remains free. That is the purpose of a therapy group, to bring this truth home: that you are responsible.

'Responsibility' is the most important word in a group-therapy process. Nobody wants to take the responsibility, because it hurts. Just to see the point, "I am the cause of my misery," hurts very much. If somebody else is the cause, one can accept it, one is helpless. But if I am the cause of my misery, it hurts. It goes against the ego, it goes against the pride.

That's why group therapy is a difficult process, hard. You want to escape--from encounter, from Tao, from primal therapy, you want to escape. Why do you want to escape? Because you have always believed that you are perfectly right, you are perfectly good--others have been doing harm to you.

Now the whole thing has to be changed; you have to put everything upside-down. Nobody is doing any harm to you. And if they are doing any harm, it is through your co-operation. So finally you are responsible, you have chosen it. You say, "My husband is doing harm to me"--but you have chosen this husband, in fact, only so that he can do harm to you. You wanted to be harmed and that's why you have chosen this husband, this wife.

Just watch people who go on changing their wives. You will be surprised--again and again they find the same type of woman. It is a difficult thing to find the same type of woman, but they find. And within six months they are complaining again. And the complaints are exactly the same.

I have heard about one man who married eight times, and again and again he managed to find the same type of

woman. Just see the point: the point is that he has a certain kind of mind, a certain conditioning. In that conditioning, only a certain type of woman appeals to him. A blonde or a brunette--a certain kind of woman appeals to him. The long nose, the black eyes, or something. Always he is attracted by a certain kind of woman. And then that woman starts doing the same things. And then he is puzzled--and he was thinking he was changing the woman.

You are changing the woman, but you have not changed your mind! So your choice remains the old, because the chooser is the old. It is not going to help; you will be in the same trap. The colour of the trap may change, the fiber of the trap may change, but the trap is there and you will be trapped again and again. And the same misery will arise.

Group therapy is a great process of understanding "What I have been doing to myself!" And if you go still deeper...where no group therapy has yet gone, not even primal therapy. But Buddha has gone deeper. He says: If you have chosen a certain kind of parent, that too is your choice.

See the point. Millions of foolish people were making love when you were hovering to take birth. But still you have chosen a certain couple--why? You must have a certain idea; it is your choice. And then you say, "My parents have done harm to me." In the first place, why did you choose them? Then your wife, your husband...and you think they have done harm? Then the society--who has created this society? You have created this society. It does not come out of the blue.

The beggar on the road has not appeared suddenly from the blue. We have created him. If you want to become rich, somebody has to become a beggar. And seeing the beggar you feel very sorry. Whom are you trying to deceive ? And you still carry the idea of becoming rich. If you want to become rich, somebody is going to become a beggar. If you want to become somebody, then somebody will not be able

to reach that fame, name. It is a competitive world. You don't want wars, but you are violent--in everything you are violent. And you condemn wars.

And have you seen the pacifists and their processions How violent they look! Their slogans against war, their shouts against war--and sooner or later the procession turn into a riot. And they are burning cars and destroying offices and burning buses and trains and attacking the police--and they had gone to protest against war!

Now what is happening? These people are violent people; war is just an excuse. Their protest is nothing but their expression of violence. They are not concerned about war, they are using it as a pretext.

This society is created by you. And then you say that society is responsible.

Nobody is responsible except you. This is one of the hardest truths to accept. But once you accept it, it brings great freedom, it creates great space. Because with this, another possibility immediately opens up: "If I am responsible then I can change. If I am not responsible, how can I change? If I am doing it to myself, then it hurts but it also brings a new possibility--that I can stop hurting myself, I can stop being miserable."

A group process is not to make you natural; it is to make you aware of your unnaturalness, of your phoniness.

Is the purpose of the therapy groups to bring the participants to their natural self?

No, not at all. The purpose is just to make them aware of the unnatural self. And then the natural self comes of its own accord. Nobody can bring it--when the unnatural disappears, the natural is found. The natural has always been there, hidden under the rubbish. Unnatural gone, you are natural. You don't become natural; you have always been natural. How can one become natural? All becoming will lead you into unnaturalness.

If so, isn't the effort to be natural unnatural?

Yes, the effort to be natural is always unnatural. But to understand the unnaturalness is not the effort to be natural, it is simple understanding. Seeing that you have been trying to squeeze oil out of sand, when you have seen the futility of it you drop the whole project. Seeing that you have been trying to pass through a wall and hurting your head, seeing it, you stop passing through the wall. You start looking for the door.

Yes, exactly like that.

If not, what is the essential difference between natural and unnatural?

Natural is that which you have been given as a gift--a gift from the whole. Unnatural is that which you have created--by teachings, scriptures, character, morality. The unnatural is that which you have imposed upon the natural, the given. The natural is from God, the unnatural is from yourself. Take away all that you have imposed upon yourself, and God will burst forth into a thousand bloomings in your being.

Somebody asks Jesus, "What is your fundamental message?" And he says, "Ask the fowl and the fish and the flower."

What does he mean "Ask the fowl and the fish and the flower?" He is saying: Ask nature!

My message is: Allow nature to take possession of you; don't try to create any character. All characters are wrong. Be characterless. Don't create any sort of personality; all personalities are false. Don't be a personality.

Then, slowly slowly, you will see something arising from the deepest core of your being. That is nature. Its fragrance is great. It is good; it is never bad. And it is not cultivated, not at all. Hence it has no tensions in it, no anxiety; you need not maintain it.

Truth need not be maintained. Only untruths have to be

managed, maintained, need much care and maintenance. And still they are untrue and they never become truth. And only truth liberates.

The therapy available here is not to make you natural. Nobody can make you natural--God has already done that. The problem is not to learn how to be natural: the problem is how to unlearn the unnatural.

The third question
How to be total? How to give everything?

Vidya, one can be total only when one is not. Only emptiness can be total. If you are, you can't be total. Your very presence will be a disturbance in your totality, your very presence will continue interfering with your totality.

That's why Buddha says: Become a nothingness. Just look deep into yourself and Let the cloud of the ego disperse. Let there be empty sky...in that empty sky there is no division. Clouds divide. When there are no clouds, the sky is undivided, one. Thoughts divide. When there are no thoughts in you, there is totality. And remember, even the thought of totality will be a divisive factor.

Now you ask: How to be total.

This is an idea. Listening to me, again and again seeing the grandeur of totality, a greed arises in you: How to be total? But you have missed the whole point. How can you ask such a question? Totality is not something that you have to be. If you do something, you will remain partial. Doing can never be total, only non-doing can be total. When you are a non-doer, when there is nobody doing anything, there is totality.

Totality is absence of all doings, all thinkings, all that divides. Totality is silence, utter stillness.

Don't ask: How to be total? Just ask: How to see why I am not total?

Remember, that's why Buddha's path is known as via negative, via the negation. It does not talk about positive things, it simply talks about the negative.

Don't ask how to be natural. Just ask how not to be unnatural. Don't ask how to be total. Just ask how not to be untotal, non-total. Just seeing is the question. Sometimes you are total--just see in those moments what happens.

Making love, sometimes it happens, you are total. That totality is called the orgasm. Mind stops for a moment. The frenzy of love, the madness of two energies meeting, merging--the mind is surpassed, transcended. The mind is pushed aside; the mind is no more needed in that space. All thoughts disappear, time stops, and suddenly you are total.

That's why people are so much in love with love--in spite of all the saints. They don't bother about the saints. People go on loving--they pay lip-service to the saints but they go on living and loving; they don't follow them. They know that they have only one moment of ecstasy, and that is love.

If you have gone to Khajuraho you must have seen the ecstatic expression on the faces of maithuna figures--lovers in deep ecstasy. Even the stone has become ecstatic. Those stone statues, that sculpture, has great poetry, has great softness. Those creators must have been of immense experience; to turn stone into loving ecstasy is great art. I have seen many things, but nothing compared to Khajuraho. Khajuraho remains the greatest wonder on the earth: transforming stone into ecstasy. The faces show something of the transcendental; time has stopped. There are no thoughts in the heads; all division has disappeared.

These moments are holy moments, because they come from the whole.

You ask me: How to be total?

Just look in some moments when you are total, just to see the taste of totality. Listening to music sometimes it happens. Or watching a sunset. Or listening to me. If you

are deep in love with me, it happens; it happens again and again every day. I can see on your faces the same expression as is there on Khajuraho statues. You disappear; something stops deep down in you. There is no movement, everything is utterly quiet--and you are total.

I give you the taste of totality every day. And Vidya, you ask me: How to be total? Just allow these moments more and more; don't miss a single opportunity. Looking at the trees, look so deeply that you disappear in the look. Listening to the birds, forget yourself completely. And so on and so forth....

Every moment there is a possibility to be total. Whatsoever you are doing, be absorbed in it so utterly that the mind thinks nothing, is just there, is just a presence. And more and more totality will be coming. And the taste of totality will make you more and more capable of being total.

And try to see when you are not total. Those are the moments which have to be dropped slowly slowly. When you are not total, whenever you are in the head--thinking, brooding, calculating, cunning, clever--you are not total. Slowly slowly, slip out of those moments. It is just an old habit; habits die hard. But they die certainly--if one persists, they die.

I have heard about a man whose wife died. And he was sitting late, very late, in the pub. And somebody asked, "Why do you go on sitting late still? Because you used to tell me that it is because of the wife that you sit in the pub so long. But now the wife is dead!"

The man suddenly stood up. He said, "Thank you! I had completely forgotten--just old habit!"

Just a few months before, it happened: the defence minister of India, Jagjivan Ram, spoke somewhere in the south. For one hour he criticized the Congress party and Indira Gandhi. He himself has been in the Congress his whole life; he was a defence minister in Indira's government

too. Then he changed the party, became part of Janata party. For one hour he spoke against the Congress party, and in the end he asked the audience: "Please vote Congress."

Just old habit--must have been doing this for fifty years: "Vote Congress!"

Habits die hard. To be untotal is just a habit. And sometimes, in spite of you, totality happens. So just watch those moments--when it happens, how it happens. Learn some secrets from those moments and move in those moments more and more. And see when it is not happening--get out of those moments, slip out. It is not a science, it is ; knack. It is a very very subtle art.

You ask: How to be total? How to give everything?

It is not a question of giving everything. On the contrary, it is a question of recognizing the fact that you have nothing. This idea of How to give everything? is again egoistic. What have you got to give? You are beggars--everybody is. You have nothing to give.

And you ask: How to give everything?

The very idea of giving is meaningless. When you have something to give, it gives itself, it shares itself. When you are happy, happiness spreads. When you are blissful, it overflows. One never asks "How to give?" One simply gives! One cannot do otherwise. That state finds its own way of expression and sharing. When you have a song it sings itself--not that you have to ask "How to sing it?" It bursts forth in jubilation, in a great shout of joy. The shout may he wordless, may be meaningless, but that is not the point.

What is the meaning of 'hallelujah'? There is no meaning in it. It is not a word at all, it is just a shout of joy. You are saying that you have something which cannot be said. You are saying something which has never been said and cannot be said.

But when it is there it happens. When the clouds come and they are full of rain they don't ask, "How can I give

everything?" They simply start giving--they start showering. When the flower opens it does not ask, "How can I share my fragrance?" In fact, what can the flower do? There is no question of doing. The fragrance is already on the way, on the wing. It has started moving!

When you have, sharing happens. When you don't have, only then do these questions arise: "How to give? How to share?"

Every evening, people come to ask me: "How to share?" And my problem is that I don't see anything that they are going to share! There is nothing. When you don't have anything, this question arises: "How to share?" This question keeps you happy that you have something to share but you don't know how to share. This keeps you unaware of the fact that you don't have anything to share--because when you have, it happens spontaneously. You cannot resist it, it has to be given forth. There is no way to avoid, it is inevitable.

So first thing, you ask: How to be total?

Not to be is to be total.

Second, you ask: How to give everything?

Know that you have nothing. And wait...and wait in silence, in patience. Something will start flowing out of your being. It will take you unawares. It will be a great surprise--that you have started sharing!

And the most difficult thing in the world is to see that you don't have anything--the most difficult, because it feels so bad that you are empty, that you are a beggar. People go on pretending that they have....

Just the other night, Big Prem's mother came to see me. She has been here for many months. Now, within two or three weeks she will be leaving, so she came to see me for the first time. For so many months she has been here, but avoiding me. Protecting herself, defending--listening to me, and yet not listening to me. Seeing me, and yet with closed

eyes. Being here with my people, but keeping aloof.

Last night she was there to see me, and I asked her to become a sannyasin--now it is time. And she said, "I cannot become, because I am a roman catholic. And I believe in God, and you are against beliefs, and I cannot Leave my belief And God has been very good to me.

Just the idea of becoming a disturbed her deeply. She immediately became defensive. That's why I had asked--to bring her whole defence mechanism to the surface.

Now she says, "I believe in God, and I cannot drop this belief" I asked her, "Do you believe in your belief more than you want to know God? God is not so very significant, it seems. Your belief in God is more significant. I am saying to you that if you drop your beliefs you will be able to see God!"

But she says, "No. I cannot drop my belief. How can I drop my belief? Why should I drop my belief? God I been very good to me."

As if God has not been good to everybody else. God is simply good! That is the meaning of the word 'God': unconditionally go o d. It is not so that it is good only when you believe in God. Then what kind of God will it be? If you believe, he is good; if you don't believe, he is bad. If you believe, he brings blessings to you; if you don't believe, he brings curses to you.

Josephine thinks that God has been good because she believes. God is simply good!--believing or not believing makes no difference. The sun shines on both the theist and the atheist. When the moon comes it shares its joy with everybody--communist and capitalist. There is no distinction. God is good! But people go on thinking this way.

Really she is saying, "If I drop my belief then I am afraid God will not be good." What kind of trust is this? And she says, "I cannot drop my belief."

And I said to her, "Your hands are empty--I see your

hands are empty. You don't have anything in your hands." But she wouldn't listen.

God is not important to her--her belief. And what is .I belief? Just hiding your ignorance, pretending that you know. It is very difficult to know that you don't know. It is very difficult to see that you don't have anything, that your hands are empty. This is the courage that I am trying to create in you--to see that you don't have anything, that your hands are empty, that you are empty, that there is no being inside, that all beliefs are just tricks to create the feeling that you have something.

When one becomes so utterly naked and nude and empty, and all disappears and all is dropped from the hands, then comes the great, radical change. One is transformed. In your emptiness, one day you become full. And out of emptiness, fullness is born. And the sharing is inevitable; nobody can stop it, there is nobody to stop it.

The fourth question

You say that you want the new commune to be separate from the rest of the world. What I see is that the ashram is the marketplace. Please comment.

Samvedana, the commune has to be separate from the rest of the world--that does not mean that it has not to be a marketplace. That does not mean that it has to be some other world. It is going to be this world, with a different quality to it. It will be a marketplace with meditation and love in it.

I am not against the marketplace. I am not against the mundane, I am all for it. But the mundane can have a suffused quality of the sacred. I am not against the ordinary; the ordinary, lived rightly, becomes extraordinary.

My commune is not going to be a monastery. Yes, it will be a marketplace--with a difference. It will not be a monastery

and it will not be the ordinary marketplace. It will be something that transcends both and implies both. It has to be like that, because man is body and soul together. The body needs the marketplace, the soul needs a monastery.

Up to now, the monastery has existed against the marketplace--soul against body. And the marketplace has existed against the monastery--body against soul. I don't want to divide you. I want to create individuals here, not divided, split personalities. I accept all; the world is beautiful. The monastery has to become a marketplace, the marketplace has to become a monastery.

It will be separate from this world--not because I am against the world, but because right now this world won't allow a new wave to arise. It will crush it. The new wave has to be protected. The commune is going to be a nursery. Once my sannyasins have become strong enough, then there will be no point, no problem. They can move into the world, they can go into the world and be in the world. But only once they have become strong trees. If they are very soft small plants, just budding, they will be crushed by the world.

The commune is going to be a nursery. And the commune is also going to be a marketplace, because all your needs have to be fulfilled. I am not against your needs. I am not against anything. I am not life-negative. My approach towards life is not that of an ascetic. My commune will create people who are together--Buddhas and Epicuruses, both together--who enjoy the life, and enjoy God too, and don't create any division.

When the meditation is released, the marketplace becomes a temple. And you can see it happening here too. The people who are working here, their work is their worship.

Josephine was saying to me about her daughter, Big Prem--she cannot believe that she works ten hours every day, typing, typing, typing...with no holiday! And still she

seems to be very happy. She could not believe her own eyes; she has watched her for many months.

It looks to you as if she is typing for ten hours. On the surface it is so; deep down something else is happening. It is a love affair with me. Those are my words she is typing. It is worship, it is her prayer, it is her devotion.

And if you love your work, there is no question of any holiday. All days are holidays. each moment is holy.

My commune is going to be of this world, and yet a opening for the other. It has to be rooted in the earth--in fact only when something is rooted in the earth can it grow unto the sky. A tree, to go high in the sky, to whisper with the winds, to dance with the sun, to have a dialogue with the stars, needs first to go deep down into the earth, has to spread its roots to the deepest layers of the earth.

You don't say to a tree, "You are contradictory: you want to rise high in the sky, then why are you spreading your roots into the earth? This is a contradiction." Yes, it is a contradiction as far as logic is concerned. But life is not logic. The tree will laugh at your logic and will call you foolish--because if there are no roots deep in the earth, there will be no branches in the sky. The tree can move only proportionately, in the same proportion--as it goes deep, it goes high. Depth brings height, in the same proportion. It is always balanced.

The marketplace is the earth. My commune is going to be a marketplace. It will be rooted in the earth, it will have roots deep into the earth. And still it will dance with the winds, sing with the sun...it will rise higher into God.

Where God and the world meet, there real religion exists.

So, Samvedana, you must have some condemnatory idea about the marketplace. The marketplace has not to be dropped but transformed. Nothing has to be dropped, everything has to be transformed. Whatsoever is given to

you is given with a purpose; it can be used. The same thing can become manure and can create great fragrance in roses. And if you cannot do that and you go on collecting manure in your house, it will stink. And it is the same manure. It stinks if you collect it. If you spread it on the soil. it brings thousands of roses, and that fragrance that is not of this world, that freshness that is not of this world.

Each and everything has to be transformed.

My commune has to be magical.

The fifth question

Rene Descartes says, "Cogito, ergo sum--I think, therefore I am." There is another statement which is now going round in the West: "Coito, ergo sum--I love, therefore I am," or, "I copulate, therefore I am." What is the difference between the two statements?

First, both are wrong. Because I think, therefore I am is to put things upside-down. Your being is first; your thinking arises later on. Your thinking cannot become a proof for your being. Being precedes, being is first; thinking is later.

And Descartes is not aware, he is not aware of the Eastern approach at all--that there comes a moment when thinking can be dropped again, and still you are. That's what happens in meditation: thinking is no more, but you are. So thinking is arbitrary, non-essential. It is not essential to "I am."

He says: "Cogito, ergo sum--I think, therefore I am." No: "I am, therefore I think." But that is only one dimension. "I. am, therefore I feel"--that is another dimension. "I am, therefore I love"...but everything is preceded by " am." That pure existence, that amness, precedes all.

So both statements are false, not true. But if you have to choose between the two, then the second is far better. First is "Cogito, ergo sum--I think, therefore I am." Second is

"Coito, ergo sum--I copulate, therefore I am." The second is far better than the first. Because thinking is of the head--very fragmentary. Copulation is more total, more orgasmic.

The second statement can be approved by the whole philosophy of Tantra. The first is ordinary, the second is extraordinary. But one has to remember that being precedes all. You are in the beginning, and you will be in the End. And all else is in-between; like dreams, things come and go.

I have heard:

A villager, an old man, was sitting on his fence watching the traffic go by. Many cars were passing, and trucks and buses, and he was enjoying. A car-driver stopped, seeing the old man, very old--must have been eighty or more--enjoying himself so much just sitting on the fence. And he asked, "What is the matter, old man? You look so happy. I cannot sit on the fence for more than a few minutes; I will become so restless. And you look so happy and so silent. I am always on the go--from one place to another, from one town to another. Only that keeps me happy. I am a traveller, a born vagabond. You are just the opposite."

The old man laughed and he said, "Son, there is not much difference. You go in your car seeing fences pass by. I sit on my fence seeing cars pass by. There is not much difference. It is all the same."

In the beginning I am, in the end I am. In the middle, a thousand and one things happen--what Zen people call 'the ten thousand things' happen. But it is all the same. Misery and happiness, ecstasies, excitements and agonies, pains and pleasures--just dreams on the way. The source remains uncontaminated. And to return to the source is the whole process of coming to truth.

The sixth question

Nothing to do, nowhere to go. You say it so clear. Your words fall like a crystal-clear waterfall on my head. Some keep

dancing in my heart. Yet I wonder. What are we doing here?

Prageeta, I wonder too--because we are not really doing anything here. That's what we are doing: we are learning how to be in a state of non-doing--wu-wei.

And the last question

Osho...

somewhere I have never travelled, gladly beyond any experience, your eyes have their silence: in your most frail gesture are things which enclose me, or which I cannot touch because they are too near

your slightest look will easily unclose me though i have closed myself as fingers, you open always petal by petal myself as Spring opens (touching skillfully, mysteriously) her first rose.

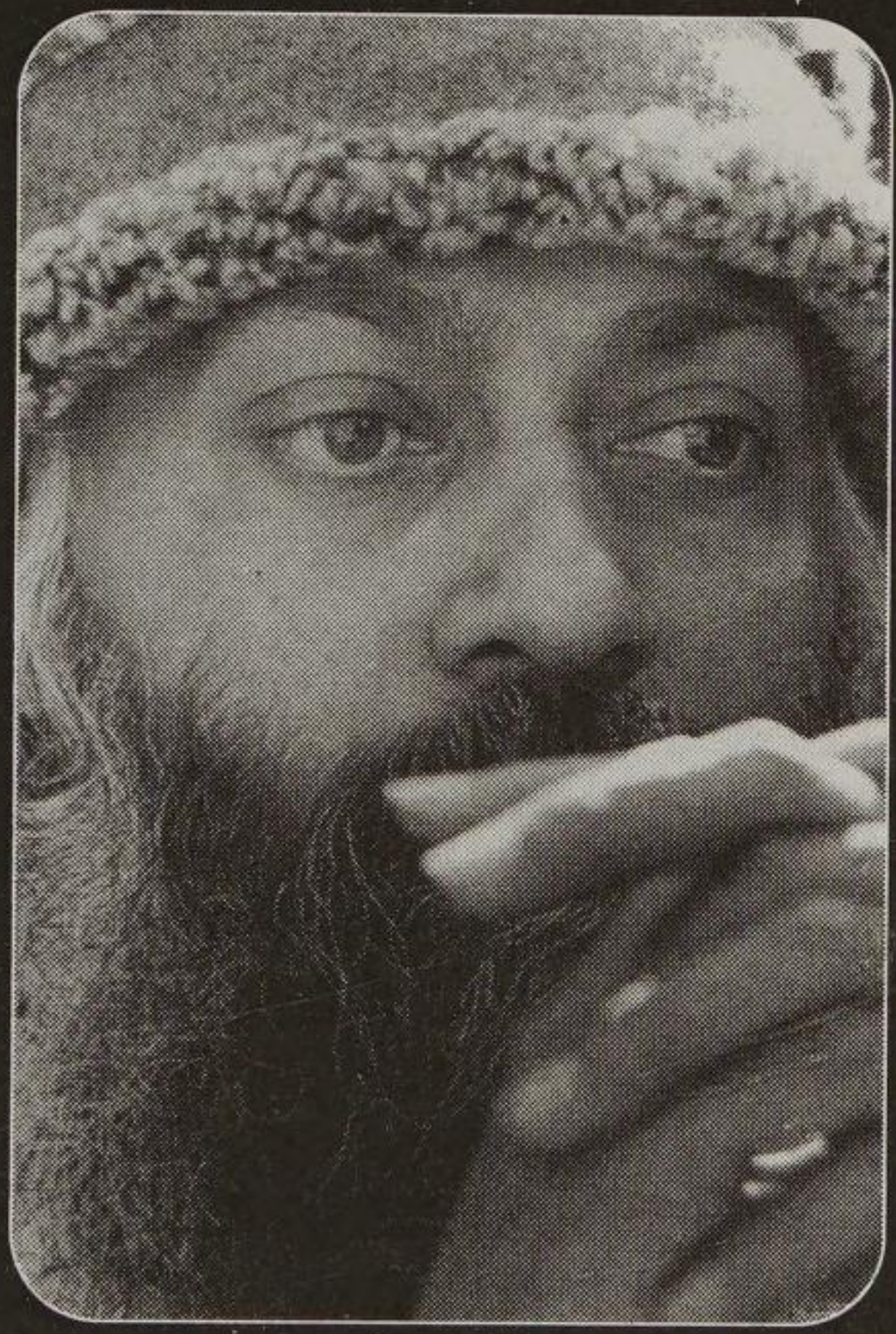
or if your wish be to close me, i and my life will close very beautifully, suddenly, as when the heart of this flower imagines the snow carefully everywhere descending;

nothing which we are to perceive in this world equals the power of your intense fragility: whose texture compels me with the colour of its countries rendering death and forever in each breathing

(i do not know what it is about you that closes and opens; only something in me understands the voice of your eyes is deeper than all roses) nobody, not even the rain, has such small hands

e. e. cummings

Thank you, Katya.



6

Daruma, the Cat and the Ladle

Since the journey of life
Is little but grief and pain,
Why should we be so reluctant
To return to the sky of our native place?

To write something and leave it behind us,
It is but a dream.
When we awake we know
There is not even anyone to read it.

Though we do not preach the doctrine,
Unasked the flowers bloom in spring;
They fall and scatter,
They turn to dust.

We are born, we die.
All are the same,
Shakamuni, Daruma,
The cat and the ladle.

To harden into a Buddha is wrong;
All the more I think so
When I look at a stone Buddha.

A fable is told of a centipede with arthritis who sought the advice of a wise old owl. "Centipede," the owl said, "you have a hundred legs, all swollen up. Now if I were you, I would change myself into a stork. With only two legs you will cut your pain by ninety-eight percent, and if you use your wings you can stay off your legs altogether."

The centipede was elated. "I accept your suggestion without hesitation" He said. "Now just tell me, how do I go about making the change?"

"Oh," said the owl. "I would not know about the details--I only make general policy."

Buddhism is not interested in general policy. It is not interested in philosophical speculation. It is interested in the details of life, its sufferings and their causes. It does not give you outlandish solutions. It does not provide you with new dreams. It simply looks face to face into life. It does not bring God in, or heaven and hell. It does not create a theology at all--because all theology is an effort to escape from the real problems of life.

So sometimes it happens to philosophers, to theologians, that Buddhism seems to be not a religion at all, because it does not talk about paradise, it does not talk about the eternal soul. It talks about the suffering, the misery, the

frustration, the anxiety, the anguish of life.

Many have thought that Buddhism is pessimistic--it is not. It simply wants to face the life as it is, and life is misery, and life is anguish. The easy way to avoid it is to escape into abstraction, to move into some dreamlands, to start thinking, about something else, to spin and weave theories so that y ou can hide the fact, the wound of life.

Buddhism is very earthly; earthbound, factual. It wants you to encounter life, because only through encountering the anguish of life is there a possibility of transcendence. But people don't want to face life. They are afraid. They are frightened. Deep down they know that life is anxiety. To face it means to become anxious, troubled. To face it means it will become impossible to live. To face it means you will be paralyzed--paralyzed by fear, paralyzed by death, because life is death and nothing else.

Everything is dying every moment. All is disappearing into death.

Buddhism says escaping into abstractions is not going to help. Going into the details of life is really going to help. It is hard, it is arduous, it needs guts--but that's the only way to face it.

Down the ages, priests have been exploiting people. They. have been giving people easy routes to escape by. They have been deceiving people. Priests have never allowed people to become literate, to become intelligent, because if people become literate and intelligent they will be able to see through the whole game that priests have been playing around.

The priests have depended on the ignorance of human beings, and they have tried to keep human beings as ignorant as possible. The religious scriptures should not be allowed; people should not read them. In India, only Brahmins were allowed to read the Vedas, because if people are allowed to read the Vedas, then how long can you pretend that there is something in it? There is nothing!

People will see it. And once they have seen it, how are you going to deceive them? How are you going to exploit them?

The power of the priests and the politicians depends on the ignorance of men. Buddhism brings a totally different light.

Buddhism says: Forget about the Vedas and the Upanishads; don't be worried about them. Your life is enough to go into--that is the real Veda. The only book that has to be read is the book of life, and the only wisdom that is possible is through reading the book of life. Become intelligent.

Buddhism is the religion of intelligence. The word 'buddha' comes from 'buddhi'--buddhi means intelligence. It is only through intelligence that one can become aware.

Priests were very angry against Buddha. They uprooted his religion from this country. And the day priests succeeded in uprooting Buddhism from this country, this country fell from intelligence, became stupid, and has remained stupid since then--because this country's greatest flowering was Buddha. It was the culmination of centuries of work, effort. It was a culmination, a climax. The days of Buddha were the days of the greatest peak of this country; this country knew the sunlit peaks. Once Buddha and his roots were destroyed in this country, it fell from those sunlit peaks into the dark valleys .

But priests were very happy. People were again ignorant. People were again asking them what to do and what not to do--and they were dishing out old recipes which have never worked.

I have heard:

An illiterate millionaire decided to leave his money to a small local college. The son was not ready to be cut out of the will. He knew that his father was ignorant and a prude, so he said to the old man one day, "Father, I hope you are aware that at that college, the one you've decided to give all your money to, the boys and girls matriculate together!" The father looked startled, and the son continued, "Not only that," he said, "but both boys and girls use the same curriculum!"

Now the father's face began to darken, and the son leaned

forward to whisper, "But the worst of all, Father, before a girl can graduate she has to show her thesis to the dean!"

"That settles it," roared the father. "That school won't get a penny from me!

The priests have lived on that down the ages--just big words. People don't know what those words mean. Big words uttered with great solemnity and seriousness, and people have been thinking something great is happening. Nothing has happened! People have remained ignorant, people have remained miserable. Nothing has happened through the concept of God and heaven and soul and all that--nothing has happened. People have remained irreligious. In fact, people have become more and more dull. The more they have believed in these big words, the more dull they have become.

Buddhism brings a totally different dimension. It says religion is not in the books. It says religion is not in great words, big words, complicated philosophies. Religion has nothing to do with linguists, with language experts. Religion has something to do with the quality of your life. If you can bring intelligence into your life, religion explodes.

And nobody can give it to you. Only you can give this gift to yourself--the gift of intelligence. Everybody is carrying in himself the potential. The potential has to be polished; the potential has to be worked out, helped, nourished. Each man is born as a seed of great intelligence. Each man is born as a Buddha. No need to beg for knowledge, for wisdom; you contain it. Just search within .

But priests are not interested in it, because if a person starts searching within he will stop going to the temple, to the mosque, to the church. If he starts looking within he will not ask the priest, the rabbi, the pundit. For what will he ask anybody? He will have his own light. He will be a light unto himself.

That's why priests were so angry against Buddha. They

were not so angry against Mahavir--Jainism has continued in India--but they were very much against Buddha. What happened? This man must have brought some new light. This man must have been a breakthrough in human consciousness. What was his contribution? His contribution was this--that each man can be a light unto himself; that no man needs to follow anybody, to imitate anybody; that no man needs to take orders from anybody, commandments from anybody. And if you continue to take commandments from somebody, you will remain less than a man, you will remain a robot.

Religion is not obedience: religion is rebellion. And through the religion of obedience, what has happened? People have become more and more sophisticated, cultured, pretenders, hypocrites, but deep down they remain the same. Nothing really has happened. Just the surface has become more shining; something like a decor, a decoration has happened. But human consciousness has remained primitive, unevolved.

I have heard:

There was a convention of missionaries from all parts of the world. Each one reported how with his fiery speeches, his pioneer work, and his exemplary conduct, he had converted the natives to Christianity.

Among those reporting was a missionary from the cannibal area of Africa. He, too, boasted of his progress with the natives. After all the reports had been submitted, a question was directed to the missionary from the cannibal area: Had he stopped the cannibals from eating human flesh?

The missionary answered that he had not stopped cannibalism, but while formerly they were eating, with their hands, he had achieved the great goal of having them eat with knives and forks.

That's how religion has succeeded. People remain the same--they are still cannibals, but now, instead of eating, with their hands, they eat with knives and forks.

Buddhism wants to change your very roots. It is a transformation. It is a way of living on another plane of consciousness. These sutras are just glimpses of those details.

The first sutra:

Since the journey of life
Is little but grief and pain,
Why should we be so reluctant
To return to the sky of our native place?

Life is a journey from nowhere to nowhere. Nothing attained through it. Nobody has ever attained anything through life. People run, and they run fast. and they go on gathering speed, but they never reach anywhere. They work hard, they labour hard, but nothing ever happens out of that work, nothing is created.

Millions of people have lived before you, and where are they? Disappeared into the dust, dust unto dust. And we will disappear into the same dust sooner or later. All our achievements will fall into dust and disappear. Thousands of civilizations have existed and disappeared with no trace.

Life seems to attain nothing--it is much ado about nothing, much fuss about nothing; a tale told by an idiot, full of fury and noise, signifying nothing.

This is the first encounter that one has to go through. If you want to understand Buddha, you have to look eye to eye into life. Don't shirk. Don't look sideways--look direct into life. What is the meaning of life? What does it attain? What does it come to finally? To nothing. Just like a great dream--beautiful palaces in the dream, and a great kingdom in the dream, and by the morning, when you awake, all is gone and gone for ever. In fact, it w as not there at all. You had only believed that it was there.

Your success is your belief....

Just the other day I was reading about a man--he was a

mad man. He was put into a hospital and treated. His problem was that he believed that he was Alexander the Great. After three years of treatment, psychoanalysis, psychiatry and electric shocks and insulin shocks and all that, one day the doctor came to the patient and said, "Now you are cured. You can go home."

The man started crying and he said, "Yes, I know I am cured. But what kind of cure is this? When I came I was Alexander the Great--now I am nobody, just nobody! What kind of cure is this? When I came, I was so elated. When I came, I was somebody special. Now you have reduced me to nobody! And you call it 'cure'? Cure me again, back to my old state. At least I was somebody."

Your success is your belief. Your fame is your belief. They are projected dreams.

Now there is a consensus among those who work in the deepest depths of the human mind that all human beings are neurotic. It is not that a few people are neurotic--all are neurotic. The difference is of degree.

Pascal is reported to have said that man is a mad animal; the only animal who has gone mad, berserk, off the track;, astray. Pascal has said that is the original sin, that man is no more a natural animal. Something unnatural has happened to him, something at the very core of his being. HE has become alienated from himself, from his own source.

The normal people that you see walking on the roads, doing their business and the office and the factory, are just normal for the name's sake. Nobody is normal. Only once in a while, a Buddha, a Christ, a Krishna, is normal--once in a while. All people are abnormal.

And what is the abnormality? They go on believing in this dream of life. They go on believing in new dreams. If one dream is frustrated, they immediately create another.

They never give a gap. One desire fails you--you are ready again to move into another desire. In fact, before a

desire starts failing, you start creating a new desire so you have some house to abide in. One hope disappears, you create another hope. But you go on hoping. And you go on seeing death happening everywhere, and still you go on hoping. Hoping against all hope: this is the neurosis. Seeing that everything falls into dust and disappears, still you are thinking to become famous, successful.

Life is a journey from nowhere to nowhere: a vicious circle, a dream-journey. And that too not a very sweet dream either, but a nightmare. Want and woe, grief and pain, suffering and suffering--what do you attain to? Just see the taste on your tongue: what taste have you attained? Just suffering and suffering.

All joy is just a hope. Suffering is reality, joy is a hope. And the hope never happens. The hope is like the horizon: it only seems to be happening there somewhere, but it never happens in you. You go on rushing towards the horizon and the horizon goes on rushing away from you. It exists not! It exists only in your idea.

To be bitterly frustrated with life is the beginning of wisdom. To see the futility of life is the beginning of a totally new journey--the inward journey. Otherwise, you go on being enamoured of one thing or another.

Just look: you have lived thirty years, forty years, fifty years, sixty years--what is the gain? Look into your hands: they are empty.

When Alexander died he told his ministers, "When you carry my body through the streets, leave my hands hanging outside the coffin."

They were puzzled. They said, "For what? Nobody has ever heard of it. And that is not done."

And he said, "But it has to be done."

"For what?" they inquired.

And Alexander said, "So that people can see that I am also going with empty hands. I worked hard, I struggled

hard--but nothing is the only taste on my tongue. My hands are empty. I would like people to see that Alexander is dying as an utter failure!"

Everybody dies that way. But to recognize it that late is meaningless. To recognize it in the middle of life is of great import, because then the radical change becomes possible. Buddha realized it when he was only twenty-nine--just young, just married a few years before, and his child was born one month before. Suddenly one day, he saw the dream disappearing. And how did it happen?

He was passing...he was going to participate in a celebration, the annual celebration of the youth of his country. And on the way he found an old man. He asked his charioteer, "What has happened to this man?"

And the charioteer said, "Sir, this happens to everybody sooner or later. Everybody becomes old."

Buddha said, "So I am also going to becomes old."

Just see: he is not concerned about the philosophy of old age--why old age happens, how it can be prevented--he is immediately concerned with his own being. He asked, "So am I also going to become old?"

And the charioteer said, "It is difficult, sir, to say, but I cannot lie either. Everybody is going to become old--you are included. Nobody is an exception."

And Buddha said, "Then turn the chariot back to the palace. Then for what am I going to participate in the festival of youth?--I have become old. If I am going to become old, I have become old! I am no more young; that youth was a dream. If it is going to disappear like that, it is meaningless to think about it, to cling to it."

Coming back home, they came across a dead man. The dead body was being carried and Buddha asked, "What has happened to this man?"

And the charioteer said, "The next step--after old age this happens. One dies."

And Buddha was so young and so radiant, and something changed in his very chemistry. His face became pale. He closed his eyes. The charioteer was very much afraid. And the Buddha said, "Then, if life is going to disappear like that, before it disappears I have to search. Now I cannot waste a single moment."

Just when they were entering the palace door, they came across a sannyasin, an ochre-robed sannyasin. And Buddha asked, "What has happened to this man? Why is he in ochre?"

And the old man said, "This man has become aware of old age, this man has become aware of death--hence he has renounced all that stupidity that everybody lives through. He has become a sannyasin; he has renounced hopes. He is searching withinwards. Before death comes he wants to know what this life is, from where it comes, to where it goes.

That very night Buddha escaped from the palace. He became a sannyasin.

What is sannyas? Sannyas is the recognition in the midst of life that life is a fleeting dream.

Since the journey of life
Is little but grief and pain,
Why should we be so reluctant
To return to the sky of our native place?

Everbody knows there is suffering We pretend that it is not, but pretensions are pretensions. Only very stupid people can pretend for long. The more intelligent you are, the sooner the recognition comes that life is fleeting, it is just a soap-bubble. And that too full of suffering! Have you not suffered? But what keeps you alive then? If life is such a suffering, why don't you collapse? Why do you go on and on? What keeps you going on? Hope.

The hope is there like the horizon waiting ahead. It says, "Up to now life has been suffering, but that has not to be

the case for ever. Tomorrow things will be better. With this woman you are suffering; with another woman things will be better. With this job you are not happy; with another job you will be happy. With this rotten car you are feeling miserable, but there are beautiful cars; you can have a better one. With this much money, of course, how can one be happy? But money can be earned." Just being nobody you are feeling that life has no meaning--become somebody and life will start giving meaning and colour.

These hopes go on and on pulling you, somehow keeping you together. Hope is the glue that keeps you together: otherwise, you will fall into pieces.

And what I am saying is not speculation. Just look into your life and you will see the truth of it. What is keeping you together? It is not life that is keeping you together; life has been hitting you hard from every nook and corner--from every direction life is hammering you. It is hope. Hope functions like a buffer. The shocks of life are absorbed by hope, and one goes on living and waiting for the tomorrow. And the tomorrow never comes. And whatsoever comes is never that which you had been hoping for.

You go on thinking that everybody else is happy except you--and that is the situation of everybody else too. They think you are happy. It is a mutual deception. The grass is always greener on the other side of the hedge. And so is the case with your neighbour too: he thinks the grass is greener in your lawn.

People go on pretending to others that they are happy. They have to, otherwise it will be so impossible to live a single moment. Deep down they are suffering and they are full of tears, and on the surface they go on maintaining a smile. But that smile becomes a poisonous phenomenon. You see everybody else smile and you see everybody so happy that you think, "Only I am suffering. If I do a little more work, if I work a little harder, if I become a little more aggressive in my ambitions, I will reach. Look!--others have

reached. Somebody has become the prime minister, somebody has become the president--I can also work it out. I still have life left."

This is the whole game that goes on.

Somebody asked George Bernard Shaw, "What is politics? And George Bernard Shaw said, "The king of the mountain game. One kid gets atop a big pile of dirt and the others try to displace him--that's politics."

The one who has reached somewhere pretends that he has attained. Nothing has been attained. But now he has to save his face too, otherwise people will say, "Then what have you been doing? If nothing has been attained by becoming the president of a country and you have devoted your whole life for it, how stupid you have been!" So when a person becomes the president of a country, he goes on smiling, and he goes on pretending that whatsoever he wanted he has achieved. This is just a face-saving device. Deep down he knows all has failed; deep down he knows now there is no hope. But what is the point of saying it to people?--because they will laugh and they will think you are stupid. And they will think, "Your whole life you worked for this position, for this power, and now you have arrived and you say yon have attained nothing--so your whole life has been a wastage?"

Nobody wants to see it, that "My whole life has been a wastage"--it goes against the ego. So those who arrive on those big piles of dirt, who reach atop, they start declaring that they have attained.

In life there is no attainment; there cannot be. That is not the nature of life. Life fails, it fails utterly. Whether you fail or succeed makes no difference--the failure is the same. Those who fail, certainly they fail; but those who succeed, they also fail, and in the same proportion. To see this is of great import.

A great thinker, Ruskin, has said that in life there are only two disappointments: to desire a thing and not to get it, and to

desire a thing and to get it. Only two disappointments. If you don't get it, certainly you are disappointed. But if you get it, then too you are disappointed--because whatsoever you were hoping is not attained through it. It is something else. That hope was your projection; it was not reality.

It is like you saw a coloured stone shining in the morning sun and you thought, "This is a Kohinoor!" and you rushed. Not only you--many rushed; the whole town became involved in it. And the more people got involved the more you thought, "There must be something in it. When so many people are rushing towards it, there must be something in it! because so many people can't be wrong."

Remember always: so many people can't be right! It is very rarely that a person is right; so many people can't be right. Whenever you see a crowd going to some place, forget all about it; just drop the idea. So many people can't be right. The majority consists of very very mediocre people. But one starts believing in the crowd.

I have heard:

A speculator in oil leases died and went to heaven, only to find the place so crowded that he could barely find room inside the door. The speculator hit upon a trick which he hoped would relieve the congestion. He produced a scrap of paper and a pencil from his pocket and scribbled a note: "Oil discovered in hell," which he dropped on the floor.

Soon the note was picked up and read. The man who read it whispered to a few other persons and slipped away. Those in whom he had confided similarly whispered to others and followed him. There was a regular exodus in the direction of the reported strike.

Watching the procession, the man who had started the rumour grew more and more restive. At length he could stand it no longer. "There may be something in this thing--I guess I'd better look it over," he said as he joined the stampede.

Even if you create a rumour and many people start

believing in it, finally you will believe in it too. It is a very very mutual deception. Create a lie, let people believe in it, and finally you will believe in it. So many people believing in it--there must be something in it. You must have been wrong thinking that it is a lie. Accidentally you must have stumbled upon a truth, otherwise so many people can't believe in it.

So many people rushing towards a coloured stone on the street in the morning sun, and all are thinking that it is a diamond, a very valuable diamond. But when you reach...if you don't reach, of course you suffer. You will always carry the wound. If you reach, then it is just a coloured stone then too you suffer.

Failure fails, success fails too. To see this is to let hope evaporate. It does not matter whether you die rich or poor. It does not matter whether you die as a sinner or a saint. It does not matter whether you die well-known or unknown, famous or notorious. Death comes and destroys everything.

Death is very democratic; it does not believe in hierarchies. It does not bother whether the person was a peon or a prime minister. It simply comes! and dust falls into dust and disappears. It won't help you in any way that you are rich; it won't help you in any way that you are famous; it won't help you in any way that you are a great emperor, this or that.

If you can see it while you are alive, then something is possible--something which is beyond life and death.

I have heard:

There was a fellow, an army man, posted in the South Pacific, who happened to contract, in the usual way, a very strong and particularly annoying venereal disease--and moreover, it was not the ordinary type of venereal disease either, but something completely out of the ordinary in every respect.

To begin with, this fellow's private parts became so swollen he had to wear pants fourteen sizes larger than

usual. And they turned the most peculiar shade of purple, and also orange--with polka-dots and stripes all around as well! It was, in short, a mess, and nobody knew what to do. The doctors he consulted had no idea how to treat it--the best they could offer was to cut it off, which the fellow said he would absolutely never allow. So it came to the point when he decided to go back to the island from where he had got this peculiar disease, because he figured they would be familiar with it, which it turned out was correct. They knew exactly what it was--boy, was he relieved!

"You mean you won't have to amputate it?" he asked the island doctor.

"That's right," the doctor said.

"I knew it, I knew those doctors in the States were full of baloney!" he told the doctor. "They all said that it would have to be amputated."

"Oh, no," the doctor soothed, "it will fall off by itself in a few days."

But what consolation is that?

Success fails, failure fails--all fails. And the ultimate is death. It is not a consolation that you will be dying rich. It is not a consolation that you will be dying famous. It makes no difference. Beggar or king, poor or rich, death comes and simply effaces your whole life.

That is the meaning of Ikkyu's sutra:

Since the journey of life
Is little but grief and pain,
Why should we be so reluctant
To return to the sky of our native place

And he raises a very pertinent question, that life is misery, suffering, an utter failure--still, why are we so reluctant to return to the sky of our native place?

One should think, when life is such a failure, people

would start turning inwards easily. That is not the case. And there is a strange mechanism working. My own observation is that if life were not such a suffering people would be moving inwards more easily; because life is such a suffering, they go on hoping more and more. To deny suffering they create bigger hopes. They cannot turn back. To deny suffering, to make suffering look small, they create bigger mountains of hopes, and those hopes go on pulling then outwards and outwards.

This strange phenomenon has to be understood. Whenever you are in suffering, you need a great dream to come out of it, a great hope, some kind of inspiration, some vision in the future, some paradise somewhere, so that you can pull yourself together again and jump out of the misery. But that big hope is going to become a big misery again--and then you will have to come out of it and you will have to create a still bigger hope. This is how one goes on and on, away and away from oneself.

Watch people, and watch yourself; it is very difficult to drop misery, very difficult. One clings to it. There is nothing else? Just watch yourself if there are two alternatives available to you. One is: be empty, there will be no misery and no joy; and the other is: don't be empty, be somebody, something, but you will have to suffer, misery will be there. And you will always choose misery instead of emptiness.

Emptiness frightens people more than misery. And the innermost core is empty. Nothingness scares people more than suffering. Nobody wants to be a nothing--and our innermost nature is nothingness, hence we cannot accept it. We go on searching, we go on trying to become somebody, something. And if we cannot have joy, at least we can have pain. If we cannot have pleasure, we can cling to agony. But there is one consolation: at least there is something to cling to; we are not just empty.

That's why people are so reluctant.

I observe every day.... Couples come to me: they are both miserable, but not ready to leave each other. At least life seems to be full--full of misery, but at least full; full of poison, but the cup is full. An empty cup, not even poison to fill it, seems to be more difficult to accept. The woman feels that to be alone will be more difficult than to be with a man who is simply creating misery for her and nothing else. And the man thinks that to be alone in the dark nights, and nobody around, will be more miserable than the nagging woman who is driving him crazy. At least somebody is there to nag him, somebody is there to look forward to, somebody is there to be afraid of, somebody is there to escape from...at least somebody is there. You can do something with somebody. You can sit in the hotel late in the night and enjoy the time because of the woman who is at home--you can escape from her. But if there is nobody-even escape becomes difficult, even that joy of escape is no longer available.

I see them in misery, they say they are in misery, and they have been in misery for seven years, ten years, and not for a single day has there been any happiness, and they are tired and they are weary, but when I tell them to separate...it is so simple! Why create misery for each other? "No, we cannot separate, we cannot leave each other." Then suddenly they start thinking they love each other. This is strange!

If you love each other, then why do you create misery for each other? But the moment somebody suggests separating, suddenly a great desire arises and great understanding that "No, I love the woman and she loves me so much." And they start thinking of days which have never been there, and beauties which have never been there. And they start hoping again that maybe tomorrow things will be different.

Ten years they have tried hard. Nothing has happened. But they say, "One day more...who knows?" People go on hoping. And this hope ultimately leads you into death and nowhere else.

To drop hope is to become religious. To attain to a spiritual hopelessness is to become free of misery. Remember, the word 'hopelessness' is of infinite beauty. It is not just absence of hope--it is absence of hope and hopelessness both, because when the hope has disappeared, how can you be hopeless? To be hopeless, hope is needed; it is the shadow of hope. When the hope has gone completely and you have seen it through and through and you have dropped it, hopelessness also disappears of its own accord. You are left without hope, without hopelessness--and the purity of it and the benediction of it.

And then only does one come to know one's inner sky: it is empty as the sky. And that is our native place. That is from where we come, and that is where we should go, and that is where we should be. To be in that state is to be without suffering and agony.

Keep it in mind: pleasure is only when it is not; when it is, it is not. Pleasure always disappears, so we have always to search for it. That is the original sin. Don't taste an apple because you are going to have to go looking for another one right after, and then there is no end to it. One thing leads to another, and so on and so forth. And you become entangled in ten thousand things, then it becomes very very difficult to come back home. You have invested yourself in so many things that it becomes almost impossible to get out of those entanglements.

The religious person is one who is not entangled anywhere, who has no hope, who has no future, who does not live in the tomorrows, who lives now, here. And see: in the beginning I told you life is a journey from nowhere to nowhere--with the religious person life becomes a journey from nowhere to now here.

I am reminded of a small story:

There was a great atheist. He had written in his drawing room with big letters: God is nowhere. Then a child was

born to him, a small child was slowly growing, learning words. 'Nowhere' was a big word for the small child and he was trying to spell the sentence, so he said, "God is now here." He made two words out of 'nowhere'--now, here. But it became a transformation in the life of the father.

Hearing the child reading, "God is now here," the father attained to a kind of satori. He had never thought about that. Nowhere was nowhere! "Nowhere can turn into now here?" Suddenly he was awakened to a totally different kind of space. The innocence of the child became a door, an opening.

Life is from nowhere to nowhere, but it can be from nowhere to now here. That's all meditation is about: turning nowhere into now here.

To be now and to be here...and suddenly you are transported from time into eternity. Then life disappears, death disappears. Then for the first time you know what is. You can call it God, or you can call it nirvana--those are all words--but you come to know that which is. And to know it is to be liberated, to be liberated from all agony, from all suffering, from all nightmares.

To be now here is to be awake. To be somewhere else is to be in a dream--then and there are parts of dream. Now here are not parts of dream but reality, parts of reality, part of existence.

To write something and leave it behind us,

It is but a dream.
When we awake we know
There is not even anyone to read it.

And whatsoever we are doing is so futile, as if in a dream somebody wants to write a poem with the idea that when he will awake in the morning he will be able to show the poem to others. People will love it and enjoy it. But when you awake in the morning, there will be no poem, and

all those people you had seen in the dream will not be found again; there will be no one to read it either.

But that is all our life consists of.

To write something and leave it behind us,
It is but a dream.
When we awake we know
There is not even anyone to read it.

The idea of being remembered in history, having a name, leaving a name behind, is carried by almost everybody. That is a vicarious kind of immortality: you want to live through others' memories. You know death is coming; now the only way to live is: live through others' memories, do something so others will remember you. If you can do something good, good; otherwise do something bad--but do something so that others will have to remember you.

This gives a kind of consolation: "I will be gone, but I will be remembered." But what is the point? Even if people remember you for centuries, what is the point?--you are gone, and you are gone! Their remembrance will not create you. Their remembrance will not give you any life. And who bothers to remember anybody?

I have heard that in a school the teacher was telling about Adam and Eve, and a small boy was getting very excited about the whole story. It was a history class and the teacher was teaching history from the very beginning, from Adam and Eve, and she asked the boy, "Johnny, you look so much interested in the story--what is the matter?"

And Johnny said, "I would have loved to be Adam.

The teacher said, "You are not happy being what you are--why should you have loved being Adam?"

He said, "For one thing at least, if I was Adam I would not have to read history."

Who wants to read history? Who is interested Some

stupid kings, some stupid prime ministers--who bothers? You were a prime minister; do you think somebody is going to bother about you? Just small children will be forced to read about you; they have to be forced, threatened . punished, rewarded. And then, too, once they have given the examination they will forget all about you. And more: they will be angry at you and will never be able to forgive you.

Could not you just have lived like an ordinary man? Why did you become a prime minister? Just to torture children?

But everybody has that idea of leaving a name--footprints on the sands of time. All is nonsense. Live the moment. live the moment in its truth, in its nowhereness, and forget all about the future. There is no other time, and there is no sense in any tomorrow.

Though we do not preach the doctrine,
Unasked the flowers bloom in spring;
They fall and scatter,
They turn to dust.

Ikkyu says buddha has not preached the doctrine--he has simply shown it, not said it. Though we do not teach the doctrine...because the ultimate truth cannot be preached. t can be shown but not said, it can be indicated. And it is everywhere! It is happening all around.

The dead, pale leaf falling from the tree is the sermon--sermon about the whole life, sermon about death. The morning dewdrops disappearing, evaporating in the sun--a sermon on life! That's how life disappears. Don't be too much attached to it. Don't become possessive about it. It is going to happen to you too--you are not more than dewdrops on grass leaves.

Have you seen a dewdrop slipping out of a grass leaf...going, going, going, and gone? Mahavir has used exactly that metaphor. That's what life is: a dewdrop on a

grass leaf, slipping slowly slowly slowly slowly. One moment it was there, another moment it is gone. One moment we are here, and another moment we have gone.

And for this simple moment, how much fuss we make--how much violence, ambition, struggle, conflict, anger, hatred. Just for this small moment! Just waiting for the train in a waiting room on a station, and creating so much fuss: fighting, hurting each other, trying to possess, trying to boss, trying to dominate--all that politics. And then the train comes and you are gone for ever. And you will never be heard of again, and never be seen again. And you will never see those people you were fighting with, and you will never see the woman you tried to possess, and you will never see the man you nagged to death.

See it.

Buddhism is not a doctrine. It is simply an effort to spell life as it is. It simply opens the book of life to you to read--and it is everywhere!

Though we do not preach the doctrine,
Unasked the flowers bloom in spring;
They fall and scatter,
They turn to dust.

And that is the whole of Buddhism, the whole taste of Buddhism. Flowers blooming one moment, another moment they are gone, fallen into dust...disappeared. We arrive on the earth, the spring comes and we bloom, and then we are gone, and dust is left behind. And all chatter, and all those miseries, and all those agonies...we unnecessarily suffered. All those nightmares of defeat and victory, of failure and success, and all that turmoil...for no purpose at all.

Buddhism is a simple indication towards life. Buddha says: Look at life! Dhamma is preached every moment. It is in every grass leaf and in every star. Just see: life is

momentary, and death comes, and death inevitably comes. Seeing it, how can you become possessive? Seeing it, how can you become jealous? Seeing it, how can you become money-minded? Seeing it, how can you become a miser? Seeing it, how can you go on killing each other?

Seeing it will be a transformation. Life is so momentary. A silence will descend suddenly, and not a practiced silence either. There is no need to practice. Just seeing this point, a silence will descend in you, a peace will arise in you. In that very moment of silence and peace you will be able to see, your eyes will become clear.

Though we do not preach the doctrine,
Unasked the flowers bloom in spring;
They fall and scatter,
They turn to dust.

We are born, we die.
All are the same,
Shakamuni, Daruma,
The cat and the ladle.

We are born, we die. All are the same. The great democracy of death. All are equal. Death is absolutely communist. Life differentiates--death never. Life makes people different; death turns them into oneness, alike. Life depends on boundaries, distinctions, definitions. Death comes and effaces all.

We are born, we die. All are the same. And there is no difference. Shakamuni--Buddha--Daruma--Bodhidharma--the cat and the ladle, all alike! There is no difference. A dog dies or a Buddha dies, there is no difference.

See this penetration of death. It takes all away--then why cling? What is the point of clinging? When death is going to take all away, why not uncling on your own? In that

unclinging you will be able to see something which is of absolute value. If you uncling from everything--from the body, from the mind, from the property, from the land, from the wife, from the husband, from the children, from country, from religion, church--if you uncling from everything, then what is left for death to take away? You have dropped them yourself; you have dropped them of your own accord. Then what is left for death? Nothing is left.

This dying, dying to all and everything, this unclinging, is the meaning of sannyas, renunciation. Then nothing is left for death--you have already dropped it. No work is left for death--you have conquered death. Now death cannot take anything away from you. Whatsoever it could take away has already been renounced. Now what is left in you?--only a witnessing, a silent awareness, uncontaminated by possessions, uncontaminated by desires and longings.

This awareness is Buddhahood. This awareness is the ultimate experience. And only this awareness is what we are all searching for, but searching for in wrong ways. This is awakening.

To harden into a Buddha is wrong;
All the more I think so
When I look at a stone Buddha.

But remember, don't harden yourself. This has to be remembered because it happens. If you see life is fleeting, death is coming, one need not possess anything, you start becoming hard--because you think if you are hard enough you will be able to renounce. You are not renouncing by understanding, you are renouncing by hardness. You miss the point. Then again ego arises, because all hardness is ego.

That's why monks become too much egoistic. They think they have renounced the world--as if they have done something great. Thinking that they have done something great shows their ignorance. If the world is momentary, what have you

done? You have simply seen its momentariness, that's all.

In the morning you don't go shouting in the neighbourhood, "I have renounced the palaces of my dream!" People will laugh, people will say you are mad. A dream is a dream! You cannot renounce it. You cannot catch hold of it, you cannot renounce it either. A dream is a dream. If you know it, it disappears; if you don't know it, it remains.

Those people who say they have renounced their children, their wives, their family, their world, their money, their bank balances, are simply saying that those dreams are still real for them. They are escaping from those dreams, but those dreams are following them; those dreams will haunt them wherever they are. They may sit in a Himalayan cave, but those dreams will go on coming again and again. They are there; they have left them deep down in the world, but they are realities. They are afraid. Why this fear? Nobody is ever afraid of a dream. Known, all fear disappears.

And these people harden. Go and see a Jain monk, how hard! His whole effort is to shrink; he lives in a kind of shut-upness: he closes himself from everywhere. He is so afraid of life that he will not look at a woman; he is so afraid of life that he will not stay in a householder's house.

He is so afraid that he remains hiding behind himself. He closes all doors and windows. He becomes very hard. He becomes almost stone.

This hardness is not liberation. This hardness is not nirvana. This is a kind of suicide! Afraid of death, he has committed suicide--but what kind of gain is this? Afraid of life, he has not reached to some higher plane of consciousness. Afraid of life, he has relapsed back. Out of fear, he has become paralyzed.

He will fast because he is afraid that if he eats well then sexuality will arise--because if you eat well, natural energy is created and your biology goes on creating sex hormones. He is afraid of food, hence fasting. He is afraid of seeing a woman because he knows his mind. Looking at a beautiful face, again

something will be stirred in him, something will arise. He knows those desires are there. He has renounced objects, but those desires are inside. Objects you can renounce, but how can you renounce desires? They are part of your being.

So he is afraid. If he comes in contact with an object of a desire, the presence of the object may help the desire to bubble up, to surface. He cannot sit with a woman alone and be at ease; he will be very restless. Now, what kind of liberation is this? This is not a higher stage--this is a lower stage than the ordinary! This is a pathological stage. And, naturally, to protect himself he hardens himself, he becomes thick.

That's why, in the so-called saints you will not find intelligence at all. They become thick. They have to become thick, because even intelligence is a danger. They have to become more and more unintelligent: they relapse into a certain kind of idiocy. They eat less, they fast more, they sleep less; they torture their bodies in a thousand and one ways. If it is cold they will sit naked so the skin becomes hard. If it is hot they will sit by the side of a fire, so slowly slowly all sensitivity is lost--because with sensitivity they are afraid sensuousness can come any moment. If you are sensitive, sensuousness is just behind it. They become like stones rather than becoming like flowers.

A Buddha has to be like a flower--infinitely sensitive, open. A Buddha cannot remain in a shut-upness; a shut-upness is a state of pathology. A Buddha is utterly open, available--available to the winds and the sun and the moon, available to...to the whole. Because he has seen the futility of life, now there is no fear. He has seen all the dreams through and through. He has looked, meditated upon them, and has gone beyond them. The only sign of a Buddha is his softness, his delicateness, his utter delicateness.

Ikkyu is right. This sutra is of great importance--remember it:

To harden into a Buddha is wrong;
All the more I think so
When I look at a stone Buddha.

I have heard about Ikkyu: a young monk came to see him and the master asked, "What do you desire from me?"

The young monk said, "I have come in search of enlightenment."

Ikkyu asked, "Where have you been before? Have you been to somebody else?"

He said, "Yes, I have been with a certain master."

"And what have you learnt there?"

The monk said, "I will show you--I have learnt yoga postures." And he sat in a siddhasan--in a Buddha posture--with closed eyes, unmoving.

Ikkyu laughed, hit him hard on the head, and said, "You fool! We don't need any more Buddhas--we have many stone Buddhas in this place. You get away from here. No more stone Buddhas here!"

And it was true, because he used to live in a temple where there were ten thousand stone Buddhas. He said, "We are tired taking care of these ten thousand. Now we don't want any more. Get lost!"

But that's what people learn in the name of religion--they become stone Buddhas.

My emphasis is that you should be soft, open, feminine, flowerlike, flowing. The more flowing you are, the more sensitive you are, the more alive you are, the more you can be now here. And to be now here is to be really a Buddha.

Buddhahood is not a kind of hardening. So wherever you find somebody hard, wherever you find a mahatma absolutely hard, know well that this is the wrong place to be. Look for softness, for love, for compassion--because out of a hard person only violence can arise.

And sometimes it happens: the person may believe in non-

violence, but out of a hard person only violence is possible, non-violence is not possible. My own understanding of Jain monks is--I have seen many of them--they teach non-violence, but they live in deep violence. Of course, they don't kill others, but they kill themselves--that is the same. They are not aggressive towards others; they have turned their aggression on themselves; they have become their own enemies. They torture themselves, and they enjoy that torture. They are masochists. They need psychiatric treatment.

A real man of awakening is not hard, he is not frozen. He has melted. The ice has disappeared into water. And finally water disappears into vapour. The first stage of Buddhahood is melting from the ice as water, and the second stage is disappearing even from water into vapour. Then one becomes part of the sky. Then one has come home.

To harden into a Buddha is wrong;
All the more I think so
When I look at a stone Buddha."

Remember this sutra--because you are in search of Buddhahood, that's why you have gathered around me. That's why you are here! Knowingly, unknowingly; deliberately, accidentally--but you are here for the sole purpose of becoming Buddhas. Remember this: don't become hard.

That's why my insistence is so much on singing, dancing, chanting, loving. The emphasis is just to keep you flowing, melted. The ego wants to freeze, the ego can be there only if you are hard. The ego disappears if you melt. So all that helps melting is good, and all that helps hardening is bad.

Be alert, because freezing yourself into a certain pattern is very easy, freezing yourself into a certain character is very easy. To live characterlessly, melted, is very difficult--but that is the real challenge. A real man accepts that challenge that "I will not create a character. I will live moment-

to-moment, without a character, out of my consciousness, not out of my conscience.

A man who lives through conscience becomes hard. A man who lives through consciousness remains soft. Why? Because a man who has some ideas about how to live, naturally becomes hard. He has continuously to carry his character around himself. That character is like an armour, his protection, his security; his whole life is invested in that character. And he always reacts to situations through the character, not directly. If you ask him a question, his answer is ready-made. That is the sign of a hard person--he is dull, stupid, mechanical. He may be a good computer, but he is not a man. You do something and he reacts in a well established way. His reaction is predictable; he is a robot.

The real man acts spontaneously. If you ask him a question, your question gets a response, not a reaction. He opens his heart to your question, exposes himself to your question, responds to it. You hear the answer for the first time; he also hears the answer for the first time. It was not managed, it was not prepared, it was not ready-made. Your question stirred it; your question created the situation for it to happen, and so on.... All his responses are spontaneous. He does not live according to an ideology. He simply lives without any ideology--just like a river.

A river does not carry a guidebook, it does not carry a map. It does not know where the ocean is--just a vague longing for the ocean is enough. Then it starts moving, slowly slowly finding its way. Sometimes going to the north and sometimes going to the south and sometimes moving to the east and sometimes to the west...zigzag. It is not like a railroad track. Each moment decides. Wherever it can find a lower space, it moves into it, and feels it is coming closer to the ocean--because the ocean is the lowest space. Finding a low place, it is moving towards the ocean. The ocean is far away; you cannot see it, but the river reaches it.

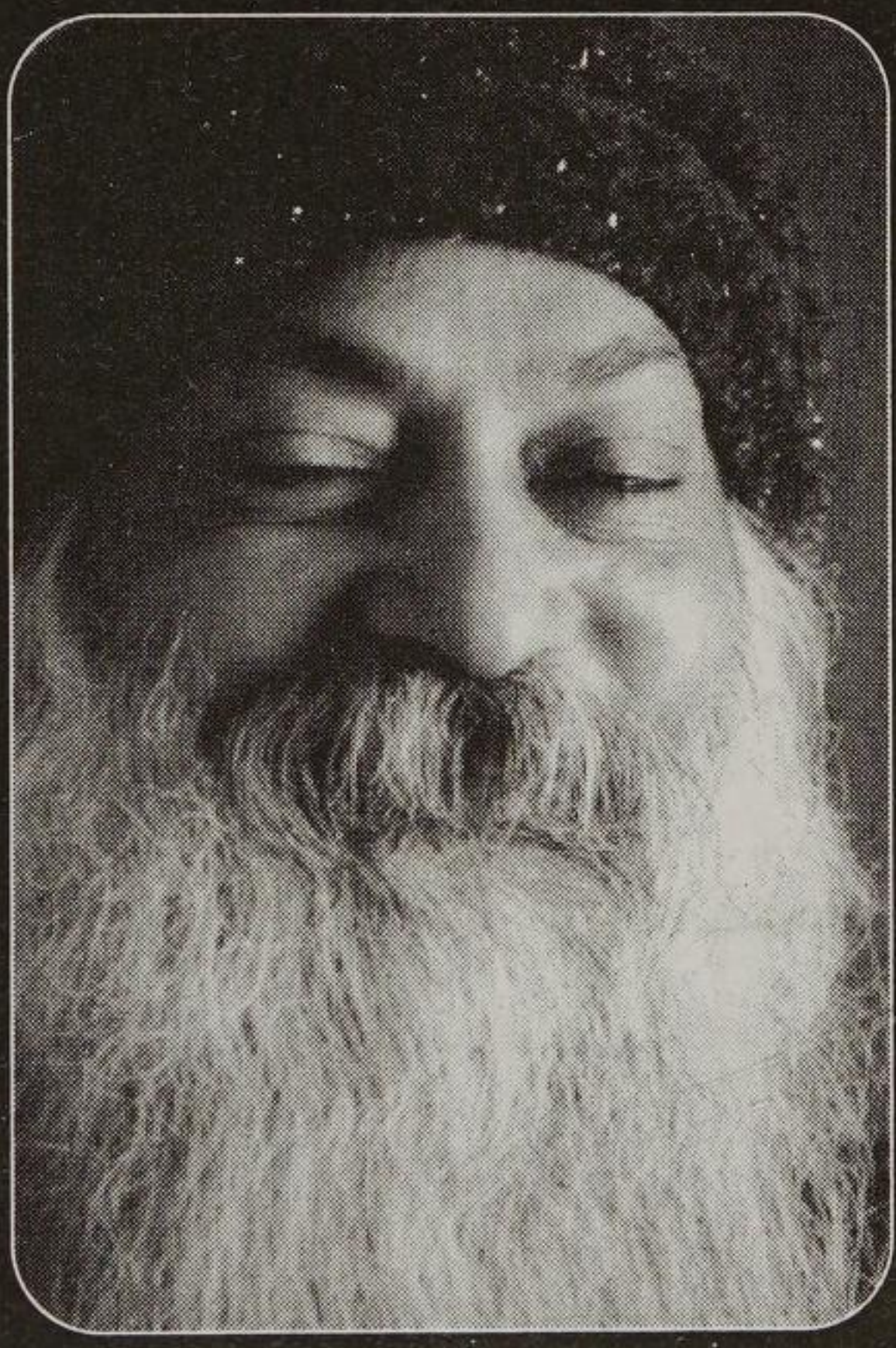
Have you ever heard of any river missing the ocean? And without guidebooks, and without maps--a miracle that no river has ever missed! No river can miss.

Consciousness is a river. Don't carry guidebooks. Don't be a Hindu and a Mohammedan--these are carrying guidebooks. Just move slowly slowly, spontaneously, alert, sensitive, alive to each moment, totally alive--because there is no tomorrow, there is no next moment. This way one comes home one day, one evaporates, one disappears. That is the day when one has come.

Your disappearance is the beginning of the real to appear in you. Your disappearance is the appearance of God. Remember it. This is one of the most important things to remember; otherwise, the so-called spiritual people, sooner or later, harden. And the moment they harden, they have destroyed all possibility. Then they are not becoming more and more intelligent, aware. They are becoming dull and dead.

Never become a mahatma, dull and dead. Be alive. Become innocent of all character, of all ideology, of all perfectionist ideas. The man who is a perfectionist is bound to become a neurotic. And all hard people are neurotics. Only soft people are divine--the softer, the more divine.

That's why you cannot see God, because he is so soft, so soft that he is invisible. You cannot see God because he is so soft, you cannot touch him. You can become Gods, but you cannot see him, you cannot touch him.



7

I am also a Plumber

What is a mystic?

Why do I allow women to hold power over me?

My urge to create has dropped away while I've become more sensitive...

What is the difference between a contented pig, a discontented Socrates, and a natural man of Zen?

I can't quite make it.

The first question
What is a mystic?

I don't know, Purna, and nobody else knows either. That's why a mystic is called a mystic. Something indefinable, something very elusive, something that cannot be grasped, that cannot be comprehended. Not that it is something special--it is very ordinary. That makes the mystery ten thousand fold.

A mystic is in a state of natural being. He is the most ordinary man, he has renounced all extraordinary desires. All desires are basically to become extraordinary, to become somebody. A mystic is one who is and who has no desire to become anybody else. A mystic is a state of utter contentment, a state of no movement. He is not going anywhere, he has no goals, not motives. He simply is. He has stopped all desires to know; rather, he has started living.

There are people who go on searching for knowledge, They are anti-mystic; their whole effort is how to demystify life. That's what knowledge means. Knowledge means how to know each and everything--so that life can be demystified, so that the wonder of life is killed and man can become absolutely a boss, a manipulator. So that man can

control everything.

Knowledge is an effort to control, knowledge is power. All curiosity, all desire for knowledge, is desire for power.

Science is non-mystic. A scientist is just the anti-pole, the other extreme, of being a mystic. He is trying to poke his nose into reality, to find out its secrets. He is trying to undress reality. He is trying to see reality so that reality can be manipulated.

The mystic is one who has come to see the point that there is no way to know the reality, because we are part of it--and how can the knower know itself? There is no possibility. It is an impossible search, it is doomed to fail.

A mystic is one who has become mature enough to be able to live without knowledge, to be able to live in ignorance, to be ready to live. He is not worried about knowing. He does not make it a condition that "First I have to know, then I will live. How can I live without knowing? If I am to love, first I have to know what love is--only then can I be loving. If I am to enjoy, first I have to know what enjoyment is, otherwise how can I enjoy?"

He makes questions out of simple phenomena. He goes on creating questions, he transforms everything into a problem. That is the state of the non-mystic.

The mystic is one who has relaxed, who says, "There is no need to know what love is--still you can love." Knowledge in no way helps--on the contrary, it hinders. If you know everything about love you will never be able to love. It is a blessing that you are not capable of knowing what love is. It is a blessing that God has made it an utter mystery, otherwise nobody will ever love. Once you know, love will disappear. Awe will disappear from life; your eyes will not know that quality of wondering. You will become smug, you will become satisfied with your knowledge, You will become dull--knowledge makes people dull. The more knowledgeable a person is, the more dull he is, the more

insensitive he is.

The mystic has come to see the point that knowledge is not possible. That the life, existence, God, or whatever you call it, is basically not only unknown but unknowable. All effort to know is futile. Relax and live.

The mystic lives, the non-mystic thinks. The non-mystic thinks, "How to live? How to love? How to be?" The mystic simply is. He is so much occupied with living that he has no energy for knowing. And the paradox: because he does not bother about knowing, he comes to know in a deeper way. It is not knowledge, it is experience,

And the man who tries to know, never comes to know. His very effort is egoistic. The seeker after knowledge is a rapist; he is violent, aggressive.

The mystic loves life, and in that love mysteries are opened, veils upon veils are removed. But the mystery deepens; it is not finished. One door opens, and you see another door. That opens, and you see another door. Deeper and deeper you move, but there is no end to depth.

I was reading:

A Yugoslav peasant who, reading the newspapers, came more and more often upon the word 'dialectics' wanted to know what the word meant, but nobody could tell him...

Communists talk too much about dialectics--dialectical materialism, dialectical evolution. Hegelians also talk about dialectics--that life moves through thesis, antithesis, synthesis; that everything moves through struggle, conflict with the opposite. And each synthesis becomes a thesis again, and it goes on and on....

So this peasant went to the priest who said, "It is simple and I'll explain it to you--in a concrete example. Two men, one clean and one dirty, are walking towards the river. Which one will take a bath?"

"The dirty one," said the peasant.

"No, why should he? He is already used to his dirt. It is

the clean one who will want to remain clean. Let us see it one more time. Two men, one dirty, one clean, are walking towards the river. Which one will take a bath?"

"It is simple," the peasant said. "The clean one, for he will want to continue in cleanliness."

"No," the priest said. "Why should he, since he is already clean? It is the dirty one who will want to become clean. Let us see it one more time. Two men are walking towards the river. Which one will take a bath?"

"Both," the peasant said--confident he has finally caught up with 'dialectics'.

"Neither," the priest said. "For why should they? The clean one is already clean and the dirty is used to dirt."

And so on and so on....

That is how the man who is looking for knowledge moves--this way, that; that way, this way...he goes on zigzag. He goes on arguing for, and then he starts arguing against, then he starts arguing for--because each for leads to against, and each against leads to for.

Atheists become theists, theists become atheists, Christians become Hindus, Hindus become Christians... and this goes on, this search for knowledge. The West comes to the East, the East goes to the West--see the absurdity of it. The Eastern seeker of knowledge goes to the Western universities. He hankers to go to Oxford, to Cambridge, to Harvard. And Western seekers of knowledge are coming to the East, to the Himalayas.

What is this nonsense all about? Thesis becomes antithesis. Everyone changes and turns into one's opposite sooner or later, because you get tired of one position and then you start thinking of the opposite position. The opposite seems alluring, new, unfamiliar, seems like an adventure. Then you get tired of that and you start moving again. By that time you have forgotten that you have been in the first position before. That's how people go on moving.

This has been my observation, that if you are a man in this life there is every possibility that you were a woman in your past life. If you are a woman, there is every possibility that you were a man in the past life. A man becomes tired of being a man and starts thinking that there must be some joy which is not available to him but which is available to women. And a woman becomes tired of being a woman and people go on changing.

Now science is making it available; even in one life you can change. Sooner or later, by the end of this century, people won't wait that long for another life--why bother ? Three years you have been a man, enough is enough. Now why not try being a woman? And it is chemically possible now, physiologically possible; you can be changed. Then you can try the woman. Then within a few years you will be tired and you will start thinking again of being a man. That's how things go.

People get tired of heterosexuality, they become homosexual. Homosexuals become tired of homosexuality, they become heterosexual. Thesis, antithesis. And there is synthesis too--bisexuals.

In every possible way, man goes on moving from one extreme to another. And sometimes he gets tired of both, then tries some synthesis.

A mystic is one who has dropped the whole search, the whole project. He does not look for any truth. He simply enjoys the simple things of life. The breakfast in the morning, the shower, the morning walk, a child giggling on the street, a dog, a crow crowing--he enjoys these small things. He is not concerned about the distant: his whole concern is immediate.

And that is the whole approach of Zen. Understanding Zen, you will become a mystic. Then each moment is such joy, such glory, such splendour. And each moment is so precious. Once the hankering for knowledge is dropped,

everything takes on a grandeur. Just a pebble on the beach is so beautiful...

Look at the lilies of the field, how beautiful they are. Not even Solomon was attired, in all his glory, like one of these.

Then this moment is all. A mystic is one who knows no time; time has disappeared from his mind. He lives in this moment and in eternity. He is not worried about birth, he is not worried about death, he is not worried about becoming. It is becoming that keeps you away from yourself--he has dropped all ideas of becoming. He is not trying to become. He simply is. And when becoming disappears, being is revealed. That revelation of being is the state of being a mystic.

People are trying the impossible. Becoming is the most impossible thing. You are--how can you become? How can you become that which you are not? And what is the need to become that which you are? Just see the impossibility of it. You can't become that which you are not; you need not become that which you are. A is A, and A cannot become B. And, of course, A has no need to become A; it is already A. This simple understanding is mysticism.

I have heard:

There was once a man who owned a beautiful garden. One day he trapped a hummingbird who was eating his finest fruits. The bird promised him three wise teachings as the price of his release. The man agreed.

Safely out of reach, the bird said, "Do not regret the irrevocable. Do not believe the impossible. Do not seek the unattainable," and burst into laughter. "If you had not let me go, you would have found inside of me a pearl the size of a lemon."

Enraged, the man climbed up the tree after the bird. As he came closer, the bird flew higher. With the man in frenzied pursuit, the bird flew to the highest branch of all and walked to its very tip. The man came scrambling after; the branch snapped, the bird flew off, the man dropped to

the ground with a thud.

Brüised, he picked himself up and gazed ruefully at his tormentor. "Wisdom is for the wise," the bird admonished. "I told you not to regret the irrevocable, but no sooner did you let me go than you came after me again. I told you not to believe the impossible, yet you believed that a bird my size could contain a pearl the size of a lemon. And I told you not to seek the unattainable, yet you climbed a tree to catch a bird. You are a fool!"

The mystic is a wise man. He is wisdom incarnate. Not knowledge, remember--wisdom. Knowledge is a search after the impossible. Wisdom comes out of relaxing into your being. A mystic is a relaxed person, he is in a let-go. Immense is the joy, unexpressible is the bliss.

Relax and see. Be and see....

The second question

Why do I allow women to hold power over me, to accept or reject me? This old rut makes nonsense at heart. I want to get out.

Abhiyana, do you know?--women love a deluded man. They are always searching for a deluded man, somebody who is mad and insane. Because the insane is very attractive: the mad, the deluded, has a certain magnetism. He is full of possibilities, dreams. Women love a dreamer.

And men ? Men love a sane woman--otherwise, they will really go mad--to keep them back on the earth. The woman represents the earth. A man needs a woman because he has no roots in his own being. He needs a woman, the warm earth, the dark soil, where he can have his roots and remain rooted in the earth. He is afraid--he has wings but no roots. And he is afraid that if he is not holding to the earth he may be gone, he may disappear into the infinite sky and there may be no coming back. That fear keeps people running after women.

And a woman has no wings. She has roots, great roots; a woman is pure earth. And she is afraid that if she remains alone she will never be able to Fly into the unknown. A woman can't be a dreamer like a man. It is not just accidental that women have not created great poetry or music. They don't have wings, they are very earthly, very pragmatic, very real--and sane, of course. They are so sane, that's why they don't write poetry. You have to have some insanity to write poetry. You have to have some delusions, megalomania, then only can you write poetry.

A woman makes a laundry list, not a poem--a shopping list. Her concern is immediate. She talks about the neighbours; she is not worried about Vietnam or Israel. She simply laughs at the people, at men--why are they so much concerned ? And they get into such excitement! If something is happening in Israel, it is happening in Israel--why are you worried ? And the woman in the neighbourhood has escaped with somebody else--that is the real thing; it is so immediate.

Women are not interested in gospels, they are interested in gossips. Both the words come from the same root. When it is about the faraway it is a gospel, when it is about the close-by it is gossip. When it is immediate it is gossip, when it is ultimate it is a gospel.

Man cannot live without woman, because then he loses roots. He simply becomes a vagabond. Then he belongs nowhere, Just see a man who has no woman: he belongs nowhere, he has no home, he becomes a driftwood, just waves take him anywhere--unless he gets entangled with a woman somewhere; then the home arises.

Researchers say that the home is the creation of the woman. If man had lived alone, there would have been no home and no civilization either. He would have been a wanderer, a hunter; he would have gone from one corner to the other corner. Look: man is trying to go to the other

planets; no-one has reached the moon. And women simply laugh at the whole lunacy. Mm? Men must be lunatics, they are so much interested in reaching the lunar, the moon. For what? You can't do shopping there. There seems to be no point at all! And there are no people, no gossipping, nothing of the sort--just empty desert.

Man without woman is a wanderer, a vagabond. Hence, sooner or later, he needs to get rooted. The woman becomes his ,earth. Unless a man finds something in him that can become his earth, unless the man finds his own inner woman, he will have to look for the outer woman.

Yes, there have been men who have lived without women--a Buddha or a Jesus. But they too have not really lived without a woman--they found a deeper woman in their own being. Because man is both man and woman, and woman is also both woman and man. It has to be so, because you come from two persons--your father and mother. Your father has contributed the man in you, your mother has contributed the woman in you. Each person is fifty percent man, fifty percent woman.

Unless you turn inside yourself and find your woman or man there, you will have to look outside, The outside is a substitute.

You ask me: Why do allow women to hold power over me?

Because without them you will be insane. And the same is true about women--without men they will be too sane, and to be too sane is also a different kind of insanity. To be too sane becomes heavy; to be too sane, then you cannot sing, you cannot dance, So a woman needs somebody who can dream for her, and a man needs somebody who can become a home for him.

This is a must--unless you have found your other polarity inside yourself. When a man has found the other polarity inside, he becomes a total orgasm. Then there is no need to look out. Still you can go on loving women, but

there will be no clinging. And you will not become possessive or possessed. When you have found your unity inside, you will still be loving men but it will not be an obsession, it will be just a sharing. And then love is a joy. Then love has a totally different quality; otherwise, it is going to have something of fever in it. The fever has to be there, for a certain psychological reason.

If you cannot be alone, naturally you feel powerless before the woman or before the man. If you cannot be alone, then your woman is your need, then you are dependent on her. And you are annoyed--your independence is lost. You are annoyed because she is having so much power over you. You cannot forgive her. And the woman cannot forgive you either, because without you she is simply earth. The sky disappears, the stars disappear. Without you she is just earth--dark, waiting for somebody. Waiting for somebody to come and bloom into her being, waiting for somebody to release her fragrance.

Have you seen a woman without love and one in love? They smell differently--actually, they smell differently; their fragrance is different. When a woman is alone she has sadness all around her: depressed, lonely, forlorn, in a despair, just anxiety. The moment she falls in love she starts blooming. Something immediately opens up. Then she has beauty.

A woman not in love shrinks, closes up; she starts living in a shut-upness. She closes the doors and the windows. There is nobody to wait for--why keep the windows open or the doors open? She starts living in a kind of grave; she is no more alive. She starts dying, she becomes suicidal. Just mathematics, just arithmetic, just sanity, is not enough. Some poetry is needed to keep balance.

And man alone looks lost; he does not know who he is. Unless he sees himself in the eyes of a loving woman, he will never know who he is. He can go on doing Amida's

Enlightenment Intensive and go on asking "Who am I? Who am I?" And no answer will come--unless he looks into the eyes of love. Only then will he be reflected, only then in the mirror will he see who he is.

The woman gives him form, substance, The woman makes him aware of who he is. By her love she creates the man. It is not only that you are created by your mother in her womb; you are created by each woman whenever you fall in love. Whenever you fall in love the woman gives you shape, colour, polish; she makes you human. Otherwise, man will be very very barbarous, violent, aggressive, uncaring, uncompassionate,

But the problem is that both depend on each other and both feel hurt--nobody wants to depend. And on whomsoever you depend, you will never be able to forgive him or her. You will take revenge,

That's why lovers go on fighting. The fight is nothing but to show that "I am still independent--what do you think?" The fight is just to feel that "I am still independent. If I want I can leave her." The fight is just...the woman thinks, "I am not so dependent on him. I can still bloom alone. I will still be happy without you--what do you think of yourself?"

Hence they fight, just to test their independence. But within hours the fight is gone and they are hugging each other. Because the moment they start separating from each other, they start feeling suffocated, hungry, thirsty. They start losing whatsoever they had. The warmth is missed, the man starts feeling cold. And if there is nobody to hold the woman she starts feeling absolutely lonely.

If there is no love we are all alone. If love is not possible, then loneliness is the truth and has to be accepted. Only love gives you glimpses that loneliness is not ultimate.

You ask me:Why do I allow women to hold power over me?

It is not a personal question, ABHIYANA. Every man

allows that power. And resists it. Every husband becomes a henpecked husband--every, I say. There is no other kind of husband. Whatsoever the pretensions, the only kind that really exists is the henpecked husband.

When the tree takes so much nourishment from the earth, it becomes dependent; it cannot remain independent. It is a simple phenomenon. And when the earth sees its own joy. its celebration, its potential, being expressed by the tree--the green foliage and the red flowers, and the branches raised high into the sky--that the earth always wanted, to have wings, and now they are there--how can the earth remain independent?

Man and woman exist in a kind of interdependence, Independent, they are half--hungry, starved for the other. Interdependence is the truth--but then independence is lost.

It is not an accident that all the monks of the world, down the ages, have been escaping from woman. The woman represents the world. They are really escaping from the feeling that they are dependent; they want to be independent.

This is a human phenomenon, not personal at all.

The woman cannot feel happy without a man. Without a man she cannot flow in dreams. A deluded man is more attractive than an ordinary man. That's why women fall in love with people who have great illusions about themselves. An ordinary man is one who has no illusions; no woman is attracted towards an ordinary man. A deluded man looks magical. He has magic, His eyes flare up with something unknown, and that is the desire of the woman. He has the sense of possibility--that sense of possibility gives him the quality of magic.

In nature, watch: the bird with the best dance and the best song gets the best female. And so is the case with human beings too. Ever observe how many good-looking women hang around the musicians, singers and actors? For what? Something magical, something not of this earth,

something of the beyond--and they immediately become attracted. This is a natural attraction; both fulfill each other. And this is going to remain.

You ask me: I want to get out.

You will have to get in. You cannot get out so easily--everything has a price. Get in, as deeply as possible. Don't be in such a hurry. If you get out, and you are not mature enough to get out, you will have to get in again. Go through the whole lot, go to the very end of it. See it through and through.

Meanwhile, go on meditating and seeing the phenomenon. Don't take it personally, it is not personal, If you take it personally, you misunderstand the whole thing from the very beginning. It is something between man and woman, nothing between you and your woman. lt. is something between man-energy and woman-energy, it is something between masculine energy and feminine energy.

Just watch it as a detached observer. Don't bring your small egos in it--they are irrelevant. They create a mess, they don't help any understanding. Just see what is happening with your energies. And, slowly slowly, that very meditation will help you to be able to find a woman within you--she is there.

And the day that happens and you start turning in, then you can get out. By getting into yourself to such a depth where you can find your inner woman...it is there. If you are a man, then your conscious is masculine, your unconscious is feminine. If you are a woman, then your conscious is feminine, your unconscious is masculine. Just dive deep into the unconscious.

And that is what meditation is all about. Go on loving, go on experiencing the joys and the miseries that love brings. They are all needed to make you ripe and mature. And meanwhile go on meditating. Both these processes, love and meditation, if they continue simultaneously, slowly slowly will make you aware that whatsoever you are finding

outside can be found inside in a far better way.

And once that happens, then your unconscious and conscious meet, you become ardhanarishwar--you become man and woman together. Then there is a difference, a total difference; your quality is no more the same. Then you can still love a woman, but it is no more a dependence. It is now a sharing. You can still love a man, but it is just pure joy, it is just overflowing energy. You have so much that you have to give it to somebody. But you can be alone too--and as happy as together.

When a man is capable of being alone and as happy as when he is together, then he will never be in the grip of anybody else. He will not feel that "Somebody holds power upon me." Then you will not be fighting with your woman or man, because then there is no question of fight. Then you are two independent people sharing out of your independence, sharing out of your immense freedom. But there is no necessity to share, it is for no other motive--just because you are overflowing. Then you don't feel hurt, then you don't feel that you have become a slave. Then you remain a master and she remains a master. And nobody possesses anybody. All possessiveness disappears.

Why does this possessiveness come in the mind again and again? Why are you so jealous and so possessive? The reason is; you are dependent, you are afraid. If your woman leaves you tomorrow, you are afraid you will lose your earth. And what are you going to do in the cold nights, being lonely? You cannot imagine yourself lonely. It frightens. Hence you are afraid: if your woman is laughing with somebody else, talking to somebody else, you become suspicious. Or if your man has gone to the movies with some other woman, you boil, you become feverish. You are sitting on a volcano, you are ready to explode into ugliness. Why? Why so much possessiveness, jealousy? The fear. Who knows? He loves you, he can love another woman. He

loves you as a woman, his love for woman is still alive--he can find another woman. And may be the new is more attractive than the old--naturally--the unfamiliar more attractive than the familiar. He has become completely aware of you. Now it is a kind of repetition, you know it. He still loves you, but it is a kind of repetition. It has lost that glamour, it has lost those beautiful beginning days; those honeymoon days are no more there. Things have settled in a routine. Now you are afraid. He may fall into somebody else's love and may have again those honeymoon days. And you will be left alone.

Fear arises. Death arises in you. You have to stop it--you have to create a China Wall around your man or around your woman. You have not to allow him or her to have any kind of relationship with anybody, any friendship with anybody, so that you can be certain that tomorrow also he will be available to you.

But the more you become possessive, the more relationship becomes ugly, the more relationship becomes repulsive. The more you become possessive, the more it becomes a boredom. And the man at least starts dreaming about other women, the woman starts thinking about other men. Deep inside, they are no more together; just physically they are together.

And the more you see it happening, the more panicky you become and the more you possess. Possessiveness is the poison that kills all love. But that seems to be bound to happen, almost inevitable. In this state of dependence it is bound to happen.

You can only be non-possessive, non-jealous, when a different kind of love has arisen in you which is no more dependent, which needs nobody, which simply goes on overflowing. If somebody partakes, good, you are grateful. If nobody partakes, very good, you are alone, absolutely happy.

The third question

Yesterday you commented on the creativity of Buddha's religion. Since coming to you, my urge to create has slowly dropped away, while I've become more sensitive, more open, more alive. Everything feels fine as it is, more than enough, and to add to it by making anything else whatever, seems like painting the river.

RIshi, that is true. The creativity that you ordinarily know is not the creativity I am talking about. The ordinary creativity is nothing but an ego trip. You want to show to the world that you are somebody--a painter, a sculptor, a poet, a musician. You want to show to the world that you are somebody. Your creativity is not really creative, it is just a prop to the ego.

When you come to me, that kind of creativity will start disappearing--because in the first place it was not real creativity. All that creativity will simply disappear from your mind. But you will become more sensitive, more open, more alive. Just wait--out of this aliveness, sensitivity, openness, another kind of creativity will take possession of you soon. You will be possessed by something from the beyond. It will not be your ego trip; you will be just a vehicle, a hollow bamboo. And the music will flow through you--it will not be of you, it will only flow through you. You will be just a hollow bamboo, a flute. You have only to allow it.

And for that I am preparing you. The openness, the aliveness, the sensitivity, is nothing but making your bamboo as hollow as possible, so when God starts singing through you, you don't hinder him.

God is the only creator. The ordinary creativity comes from the ego: "I am the creator." That's why you see the ordinary poet and the painter so egoistic. It is difficult to find more egoistic people than the artists; they are very egoistic. Always fighting amongst themselves like dogs--criticizing each other and fighting and barking, and

everybody pretending that he is the only authentic, original, creative person, and everybody else is just phony. Why does this happen to artists?

The reason is simple: the creativity is not yet from the beyond, it is not of the transcendent. It is very tiny. They are simply bragging about themselves.

This happens here to many people every day. So many people come to me. They say, "We want to become therapists, we want to become healers, we want to become this and that..." Seeing that the therapists are important people, healers are important people, they are doing something extraordinary, everybody that comes here sooner or later starts thinking that he has to become a therapist or a healer.

This is not creativity. This is just finding a way, a means, for the fulfillment of the ego. And if the ego is there, you cannot be a real therapist. Real therapists are rare. A real therapist is one who is ready to let God work through him--and that is the definition of a real healer. Therapy means healing. A healer is not a healer; a healer is just a passage for God's healing forces to flow through. He cannot claim

So if you move towards healing with the idea that "I have to become a healer, then I will be somebody important, doing great miracles around," you will never be a healer. How can you be a healer? Because the very condition of being a healer is dropping the ego.

It is very rare to find a healer, very rare to find a therapist. I am training my therapists, my healers, here. The whole training is that they should disappear. They should not be there, they should become absent. And through the absence of the ego, some presence, some unknown presence, starts working through you. That brings miracles to life. That is a real phenomenon, not a created, believed-in thing.

So when you come to me, whatsoever you have been doing, if it was not real it will disappear. And it is good that

it disappears. If it was real, then it will be enhanced immediately. That too is good. But I am not here to support anything unreal.

This Buddhafield is going to take everything away from you that is ego-centered, ego-oriented. Then, slowly slowly, one day you will be surprised by the arrival of a new energy knocking on your doors. The sun has risen, you are not to be found, and the poetry arises and the painting happens. You cannot even sign it; you cannot say, "This is mine." At the most, you can be grateful that "God has chosen me as a vehicle, as a medium."

The fourth question

What is the difference between a contented pig, a discontented Socrates, and a natural man of Zen?

You will have to understand these five categories. First, the contented pig. It has nothing to do with pigs, remember: all these categories are of human beings. The contented pig is that man or woman who lives in an unconscious way; who simply vegetates, who has no awareness--hence there is no discontent. Discontent presupposes a little awareness.

If you are unconscious and somebody is doing surgery on you, you will not feel any pain. How can you feel pain? To feel pain, consciousness is needed. That's why in surgery we have to give anaesthesia, so the man falls completely asleep in a coma. Then you can cut, remove parts of the body without any pain. Otherwise, the pain is going to be unbearable.

A contented pig is that kind of man who lives in life absolutely like a robot, a zombie. Who eats, walks, goes to work, comes home, makes love, reproduces children, and dies, never becoming aware of what really was happening. Just moves from one thing to another in a kind of daze.

The second is the discontented pig. He is still

unconscious, ninety-nine percent unconscious, but one percent of consciousness is arising. The first ray of consciousness has penetrated; one is becoming aware of the pain and the anguish and the anxiety of life. People avoid the second state; they want to live in the first.

The first state is that of the materialist. Don't think, don't contemplate, don't meditate upon anything. Don't become conscious--consciousness is dangerous. Remain unconscious. And if sometimes in spite of you some consciousness happens--because life has so much pain that sometimes it can happen that just the pain can give you a little consciousness--then go and take drugs, tranquillize yourself. Or alcohol is there and other intoxicants are there. Just dull yourself again, back into your anaesthetic life, into your unconsciousness. Fall again into that anaesthesia.

The discontented pig is one who is coming out of this anaesthesia. Have you ever been into anaesthesia? Slowly slowly, when you start coming out of it, you start hearing a few noises around--the traffic noise, the doctors walking, the nurses talking. Slowly slowly, you start feeling some pain in those parts of the body where the operation has been done. Slowly slowly, you come back.

The discontented pig is one who is coming out of the anaesthesia of life, who is becoming a man. It is painful--to be a man is painful, to remain a pig is very painless. Millions have decided to remain pigs.

When the discontent arises, you are becoming religious: the first approach towards God.

And the third state is discontented Socrates. You are fully alert about the pain, and you are divided. You are two now: the pain is there and you are there. And life becomes almost unlivable, the pain of it is so much. Something has to be done--either you fall back and become again a pig, or you start moving and become a Buddha.

The discontented Socrates is just the midpoint. Below, at

the lowest, is the pig. Above, at the highest, is the Buddha, the real, natural man of Zen. Discontented Socrates is just in the middle, in the middle of the bridge. And there is every possibility that you will fall back--because the old is known, and the future is unknown. Who knows? If you go ahead, pain may increase even more--who knows? You have never known that state ahead. But you know one thing--that at the back there was a moment when there was no pain. Why not fall back into it?

That's where people start becoming interested in drugs That is falling back, that is a regression. Man cannot be freed from alcohol and such intoxicants unless man is but on the way towards Buddhahood. No government can prevent people from alcohol; they will find ways. Because life becomes so unbearable, one has to forget it. Either one has to become a Buddha or one has to become a pig. One cannot remain in the middle--the middle is such a torture.

The fourth state is contented Socrates. You start moving ahead, you don't go back. You move more and me re into awareness, you move more and more into meditation. Your thinking is transformed more into a kind of meditativeness. So the fourth stage is contented Socrates: consciousness and unconscious are being bridged.

And the fifth state is: no contentment, no discontentment; no pig, no Socrates. All is gone, all those dream have disappeared. Neither conscious nor unconscious, but a new thing, transcendence, has arisen. This is Buddhahood. This is what Zen people call the natural state of man: Purified of all junk, cleaned of all dust. Purified of all poisons and the past and the memories, sanskaras, conditionings. You have come home.

The pig is completely unconscious. The natural man of Zen is completely conscious. Between these two are those other three states. These five states have to be pondered over. Find out where you are, and start moving from there.

The goal is not far away. Sometimes it can be reached in a single step, in a single leap. All that is needed is courage. It is out of fear that people fall back into the old rut.

If I can teach you courage, I have taught you all. If I can help you to be courageous, then I have made you religious. To me, courage is the most important religious quality. More important than truth, more important than honesty, more important than anything else. Because without courage, nothing becomes possible--neither truth nor love nor God.

The sixth question.
When is mind against itself?

Always .

The last question

During your discourse yesterday, you spoke on how we can move from being like ice to becoming like water, then evaporating. Your words prompted a feeling I have been getting for a few months now--a feeling of great affinity for and attraction to water. I really love taking showers and to go for a swim is my idea of paradise. I want to become the water and merge with it. But I get out of the water feeling frustrated--I can't quite make it.

It is the same with looking at a river or lake--the desire for union is there, but the realization seems both so close and yet so far away.

Can this tell me anything about myself?
By the way, I'm a plumber.

Chaitanya Sattva, metaphors are metaphors--don't take them literally. When I say: Melt, let your ice become water, and evaporate, let your water become vapour--I am talking in metaphors. All that I am saying to you is metaphorical, because that is the only way to say it. But don't become too

much attached to metaphors, otherwise you will miss the point.

Water is beautiful! and a love for swimming is beautiful. But if you take the metaphor too seriously and if you stretch it too far away, you will create trouble for yourself. That's what has happened to you, that's what has happened to many people here. They listen to me, they jump upon one metaphor that appeals to them, they take hold of it, and they start thinking; that they have got something; of the truth.

A metaphor has to be understood and dropped! and forgotten! A metaphor is dangerous. If you take it too seriously, you miss the point. A metaphor is only an indicator, it is a way of saying.

It is good if you understand what I mean by 'melting'. You are not ice, certainly not. Had you been ice it would have been so easy--you would have melted in the Poona heat automatically! You are not ice, certainly not. Things are more difficult.

Metaphors are simple. They have to be simple, because they want to relate something which cannot be related in any other way. Melting has to be understood. By 'melting' I mean become loving--because love melts. The warmth of love--not the Poona heat--the warmth of love melts you.

'Become water'--what do I mean by saying that? I mean become a flow, riverlike, but not that you have to become a river. You have been a river somewhere millions of lives before. You have lost that, you have gone far away from it, and there is no need to go back to it. You have evolved much.

Hence, the desire remains there. When you go to the sea and you feel a great attraction towards the sea, a gravitation almost, a pull, do you know from where it comes? Millions of lives before, you have been in the sea, you have been a fish, life started there. And our bodies have not forgotten it yet; they never forget anything, their memory is absolute.

The body knows the thrill, the freedom, the flow of the ocean. So when you see ocean waves, you cannot resist.

Something pulls you: "Come into the ocean? It is your fish inside.

Do you know that in the mother's womb for nine months you swim in almost the same kind of water as in the sea--with the same chemicals, in the same proportion? Do you know? Inside your body, eighty percent is seawater. Just don't take salt for a few days and you will feel so tired, because that sea-water is not getting as much salt as it needs, and the fish is feeling thirsty, tired, worried.

Eighty percent you are still water! And the water is exactly of the same kind as sea-water. That's why, why it is full moon you feel great upsurges of energy in you!. Exactly like the ocean--when it is full moon the ocean is affected. Eighty percent you are also ocean! You are bound to be affected.

In your small ocean, in your tea-cup, storms arise. Many more people go mad on the full-moon night than on any other night. That is only one side of the story: many more people become enlightened too on the same night! Buddha became enlightened on a full-moon night. He was born on a full-moon night, he became enlightened on a full-moon night, he died on a full-moon night. He must have. been a great fish.

So when you are attracted to the ocean...something deep in your memories is ingrained. That's what happens When you go to the lake and to the river, to a swimming pool--or if you cannot go anywhere, then just sitting under your shower. The falling water on you stirs the memories in the body. The body feels relaxed, happy. The body. feels nourished, rooted, centered.

But that is not what I mean. Enjoy all these things, these are beautiful things--I am not against them, I am all for them. But my metaphor has some other meaning. When I say 'melt' I mean love. Create as much love heat in you as possible. Only that can melt you. When I say 'become water' I mean become a flow--don't remain stagnant. Move,

and move like water.

Lao Tzu says: The way of the Tao is a watercourse way . It moves like water. What is the movement of water? or of a river? The movement has a few beautiful things about it. One, it always moves towards the depth, it always searches for the lowest ground. It is non-ambitious; it never hankers to be the first, it wants to be the last.

Remember, Jesus says: Those who are the last here will be the first in my kingdom of God. He is talking about the watercourse way of Tao--not mentioning it, but talking about it. Be the last, be non-ambitious. Ambition means go uphill. Water goes down t searches for the lowest ground, it wants to be a nonentity. It does not want to declare itself unique, exceptional, extraordinary. It has no ego idea.

That is what I mean when I say become water: drop the ego. Drop ambition. Don't struggle for the top of the hill and don't start moving upstream. Go with the stream, down the stream, seek and search the lowest--because only in the lowest will you find peace and tranquillity and silence. And only in the lowest will you find the inner emptiness I have been talking about all these days. When you start striving to be somebody, you will not be empty. You will become full of bullshit, you will become garbage.

Go downward. Search the lowest depths and disappear there...one thing.

Second thing: the water is soft, feminine. The water is non-aggressive, it never fights--it makes its way without fighting. It is from water that the Chinese and Japanese learnt the secret art of judo or jujitsu. Winning without fighting, conquering through surrendering--wei-wu-wei.

Learn from the water one thing: that it comes across great stone walls, granite walls. It does not fight, it goes on flowing silently. If the stone is too big it finds another way, it bypasses it. But slowly slowly the granite is dissolved into water, becomes sand. Ask the sands of the oceans from

where they have come. They have come from the mountains. They will tell you a great secret: "Water wins finally. And we were hard, and we knew...how can water will ' So we were very very settled. We could not believe that this poor water, so soft, unharming, unhurting, non-violent...how can it destroy us? But it destroyed us."

That is the beauty of the feminine energy. Don't be like a rock! Be like water--soft, feminine. And victory is yours.

Remember Jesus again: Blessed are the meek, for theirs is the kingdom of God.

The meek?--the watercourse way--they will. It takes time, but they have patience. They have no idea of winning, that's why they win. The people who want to win are defeated by their very idea, because they start struggling, and in struggling they dissipate their energy.

That's what I mean when I say 'become water'--melt, become water.

And what do I mean when I say 'evaporate'? That is the ultimate--that is learning how not to be, that is learning the art of absence. The vapour simply disappears, you cannot catch hold of it, you cannot even see it. You can see it only when it is turning into vapour--al-d Soon it is gone, and soon it is invisible.

A Buddha is seen only when he is in the body. Once the body is dropped, you will not be able to catch hold of him. He is simply gone, he has become part of the ultimate sky. That is the ultimate--to disappear. Buddha calls it anatta, no-self. Shunyata--emptiness, nothingness. Nirvana--cessation.

So when I use these metaphors, always remember they are metaphors. Poetic ways of saying, things which cannot be said in any other way.

You ask:

During your discourse yesterday, you spoke on how we can move from being like ice to becoming like water, then

evaporating. Your words prompted a feeling I have been getting for a few months now--a feeling of great affinity for and attraction to water.

Get attracted to water, feel affinity with water. Feeling? affinity with any element of nature--water, fire, sky, earth, air--is immensely helpful. But that's not what I meant.

I really love taking showers and to go for a swim is my idea of paradise.

Sattva, you are a good man. That's how one should think of paradise. Do you know about Jain monks? They don't take a shower, they don't take a bath. Never go to a Jain paradise, otherwise you will be in difficulty. There will be no showers. And plumbers, of course, will not be needed. They are so much against the body that even a simple joy like a shower seems to be too much of a luxury.

See the pathological mind, how it works. Afraid that if they take a shower they will be enjoying the body--the joy that will come, and the gladness that will spread all over the body. They are so against the body, how can they take a shower? They stink. They don't brush their teeth because that is a kind of beautifying of the body. And for what? The body has to be dropped, the sooner the better. The body has to be felt as horrible, so make it as horrible as possible. Make it horrible for yourself and for others too!

It used to happen in the past: Jain monks and nuns used to come to me to see me. Now they have become too afraid, they don't come. And even if they want to come, their followers won't allow them. They used to come; it was such a difficult thing to talk to them, because their breath smells so badly that one really feels that the body is horrible. Their bodies smell so badly.

What have people been doing on this earth? Negating life.

My approach is that of affirmation. I am in love With life. t is fleeting, it is momentary--but who says that it is not

momentary and it is not fleeting? Still you can love it--even more so because it is fleeting. You can pour all your love. Tomorrow it may not be there.

Go on loving, go on being as much in celebration as possible, in all the ways possible.

You say: I really love taking showers and to go for a swim is my idea of paradise. I want to become the water and merge with it.

That is taking, the metaphor too tar. Good!--when swimming in a river feel one with the river. Feel the river pass through you. But please don't become water itself, otherwise how will you come back? And who is going to do the plumbing in the ashram? Please don't do that; you have to come back too.

And that will not be a real thing, either. If somebody thinks he has become water, he has simply gone mad. If somebody thinks that he has become the tree, he has gone mad. It is the same--somebody thinks he has become Napoleon and somebody has become Alexander the Great...it is the same! Now you are doing the same trick with water, but it is madness.

Enjoy the unity, the affinity, the synchronicity with water, the harmony! But there is no need to become water--there is no need.

I want to become the water and merge with it. But I get out of the water feeling frustrated...

Naturally. If you want to merge with it and then you have to get out of it, the frustration comes. It is your idea of getting merged with the water that is creating the frustration. You have to get out of it as you got in it! Enjoy being with it but don't become obsessed, and then the frustration will disappear.

I can't quite make it.

There is no need.

It is the same with looking at a river or lake--the desire

for union is there but the realization seems both so close and yet so far away.

It is bound to be so. You are trying to live a metaphor. A metaphor has to be understood, not lived! Live life! understand metaphors.

The word 'God' is not God. Don't start living the word 'God'--that's what people are doing. The word 'love' is not love--don't start living the word 'love'--that's what people are doing. 'Love' is just a symbol to indicate towards something which is far more complex, far simpler, far bigger and more infinite, than the word can contain. Only silence can contain it.

Can this tell me anything about myself?

Certainly. It tells one thing--that you take words too seriously. That you don't understand that which is hidden behind the words, that you don't understand that which is between two words--in the intervals and the gaps. You jump upon the words and you try to carry them in your life. Your life will become false, phony, pseudo. Avoid it.

By the way I am a plumber, you say.

By the way, I am also a plumber. I plumb into the depths of your being. And when somebody starts leaking, I have to fix them. And when somebody's nut-bolts become loose, I have to make them tight again. Or when somebody's nut-bolts are too tight I have to make them loose.

By the way, I am also a plumber....

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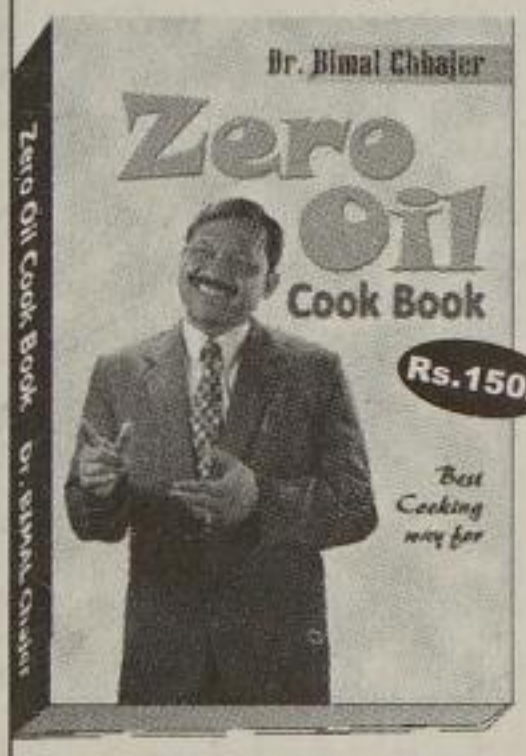

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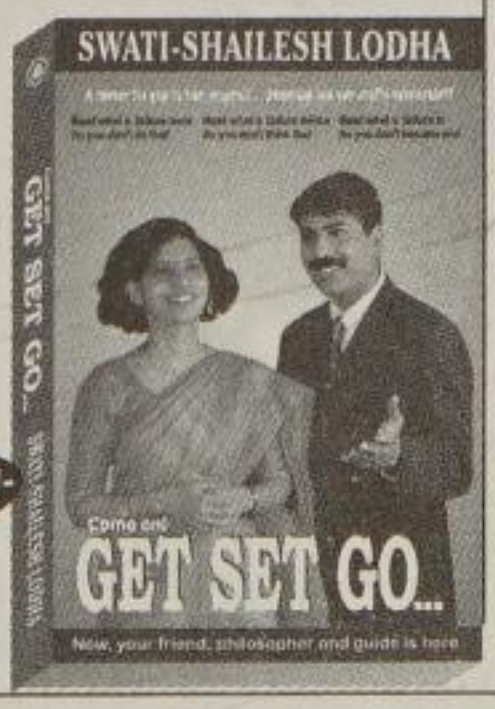

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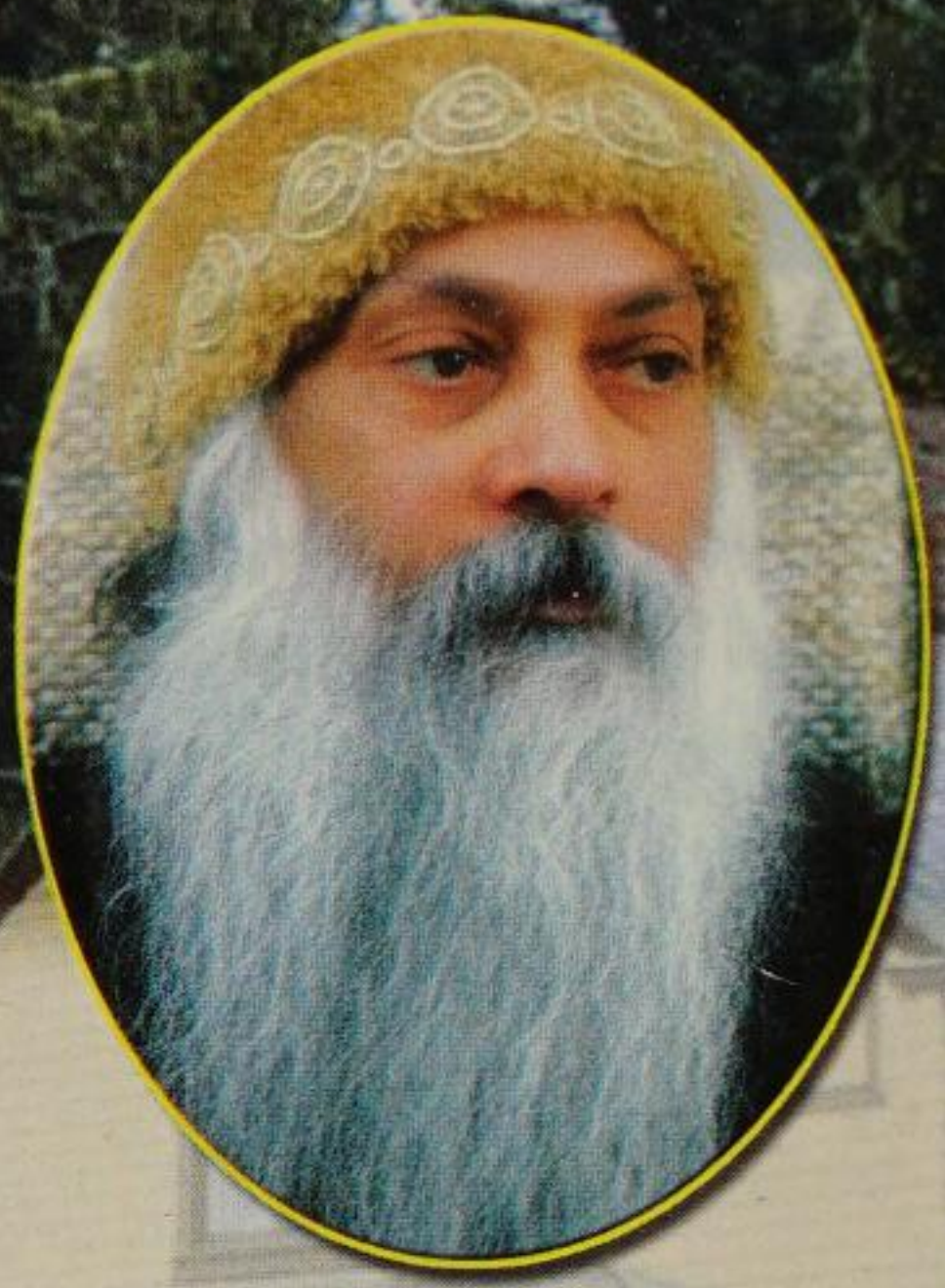

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